

# MORE THAN MONEY

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JOHN D. FREEMAN



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BY

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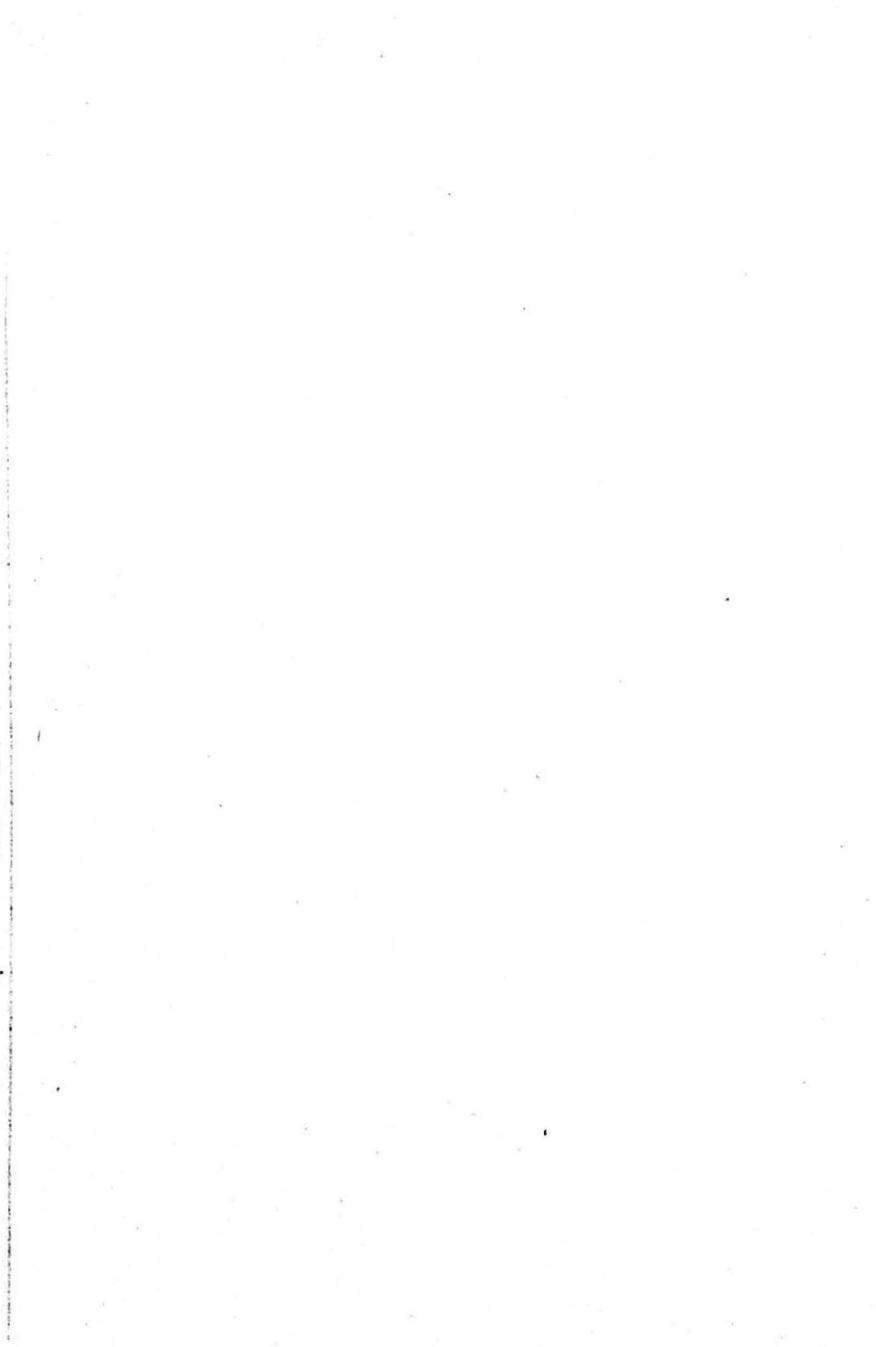


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## DEDICATED TO,

That royal host of young people who are seeking to realize the sublime ideal which Jesus gave the world when he called his disciples about him in the mountains of Galilee and unfolded to them the eternal principles of his kingdom.





## FOREWORD

The word "steward" is of lowly origin, but it has come to fill a big place in our everyday speech. It is made up of two Anglo-Saxon words, *stig* or *sti* (pigpen), and *weard* (guard). Originally the word was *stiweard* (pigpen guard). Among our primitive ancestors the hog was, as it is today among the peasants of Ireland, the chief domestic animal, and its pen was carefully protected against anything or anybody that might harm the beasts within. Hence the name "steward" came early in English history to be applied to anyone entrusted with the care of another's valued property.

We do not, however, comprehend the meaning of the name as applied to those who guard the possessions of Christ Jesus until we have gone to the original text of the New Testament, for therein we find a Greek word which is so significant that it makes us forget the lowly origin of our Anglo-Saxon term. In Luke 16: 2-8 and other passages we find the original word to be *oikonomos* (pronounced oy-ko-no-mos with the primary accent on the third syllable). From it we have our English words "economics," "economist," etc. It means literally a housekeeper. "Moreover it is required in stewards [housekeepers], that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4: 2).\* ". . . Minister the same one to another, as good stewards [economists] of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4: 10).

We are familiar with the duties of a housekeeper. She (for usually with us it is a woman) must take everything under her care. Nothing is hers; yet she may use anything, provided she does so in the light of the best interests of her employer. She has no right to waste the things under her care, or to dispose of them save as directed by her master. If he is a gracious and considerate employer, she may enjoy all that he enjoys. If he is a careful, honest, and just employer, she must account to him for everything she thus uses and enjoys. In other words,

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\*All Scripture quotations given in this volume are from the King James Version, unless otherwise indicated.

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# DIRECTIONS FOR THE TEACHING AND THE STUDY OF THIS BOOK FOR CREDIT

## *I. Directions for the Teacher*

1. Ten class periods of forty-five minutes each, or the equivalent, are required for the completion of the book for credit.

2. The teacher of the class is given an award on the book if he requests it.

3. The teacher shall give a written examination covering the subject matter in the textbook, and the student shall make a minimum grade of 70 per cent. The examination may take the form of assigned work to be done between the class sessions, or as a final examination at the end of the course.

Exception: All who attend all of the class sessions; who read the book through by the close of the course; and who, in the judgment of the teacher, do the classwork satisfactorily may be exempted from taking the examination.

4. In the Graded Training Union Study Course, a seal for Course VIII, Stewardship, is granted to young people for the completion of this book.

Sunday school credit may be elected by the pupil. Application for Sunday school awards should be sent to the state Sunday school department and for Training Union awards to the state Training Union department. These departments will provide the forms for these applications. They should be made in duplicate and both copies sent.

## *II. Directions for the Student*

### **1. In Classwork**

(1) The pupil must attend at least six of the ten forty-five minute periods to be entitled to take the class examination.

(2) The pupil must certify that the textbook has been read. (In rare cases where pupils may find it impracticable to read the book before the completion of the classwork, the teacher may accept a promise to read the book carefully within the next two weeks.)

(3) The pupil must take a written examination, making a minimum grade of 70 per cent. (All who attend all of the class sessions; who read the book through by the close of the course; and who, in the judgment of the teacher, do satisfactory classwork may be exempted from taking the examination.)

### **2. Individual Study by Correspondence**

Those who for any reason wish to study the book without the guidance of a teacher will use one of the following methods:

(1) Write answers to the questions printed in the books, or

(2) Write a development of the chapter outlines.



If the second method is used, the student will study the book and then with the open book write a development of the chapter outlines.

In either case the student must read the book through.

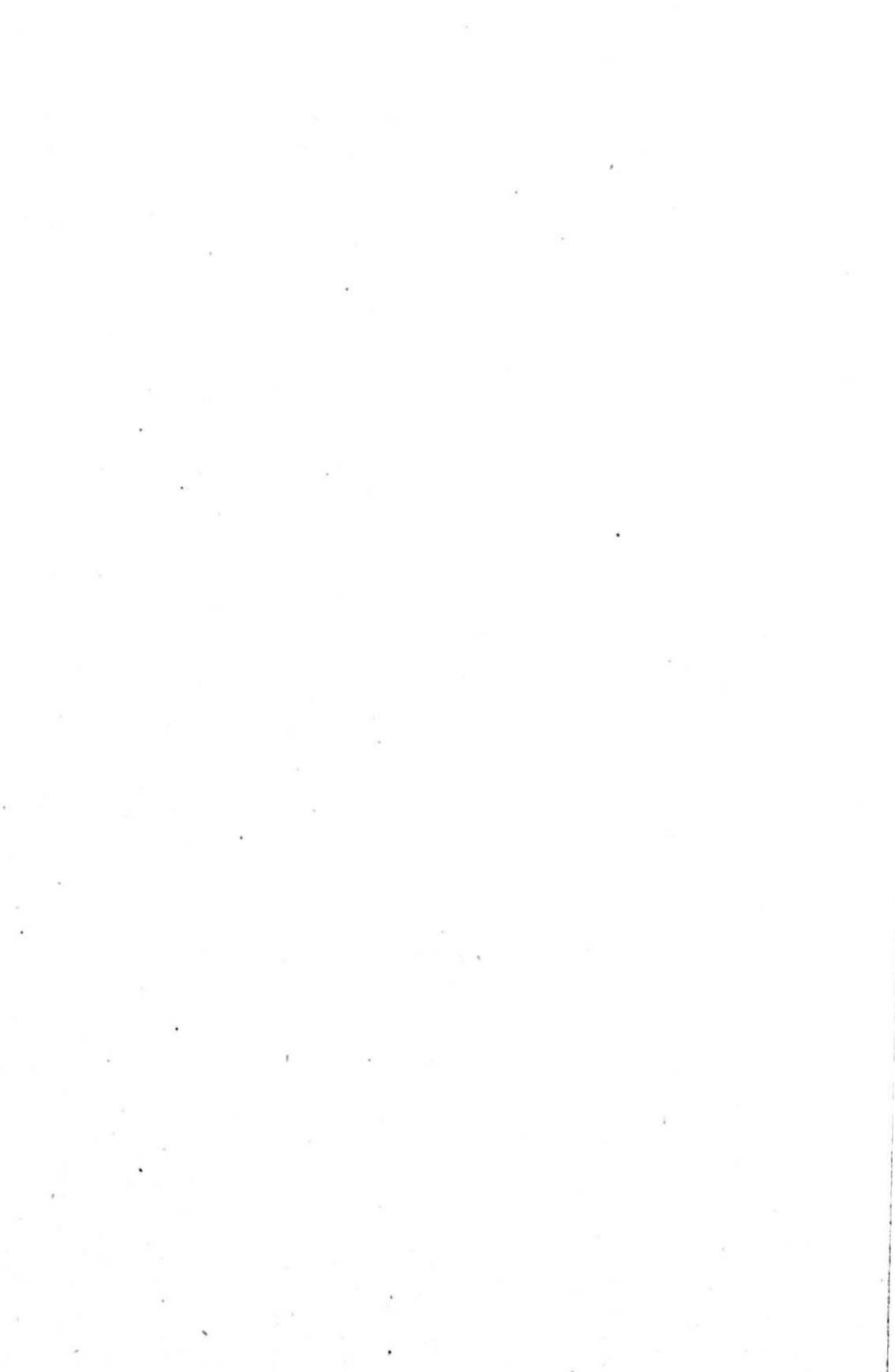
Students may find profit in studying the text together, but where awards are requested, individual papers are required. Carbon copies or duplicates in any form cannot be accepted.

All written work done by such students on books for Sunday school credit should be sent to the state Sunday school secretary. All of such work done on books for Training Union credit should be sent to the state Training Union secretary.

### III. *Interchange of Credits and Awards on Comparable Subjects*

One award, either for Training Union or Sunday school, is granted for completing this book.

J. E. LAMBDIN  
*Secretary and Editor,*  
*Training Union Department,*  
*Baptist Sunday School Board*



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INTRODUCTION: The Basis of True Freedom

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## CHAPTER I

### ROYAL SERVITUDE

#### Basis of Stewardship

#### INTRODUCTION: True Freedom

Know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price—1 Cor. 6: 19-20.

Before anyone can understand himself and his relationship to others he must first realize what he is and for what purpose he is where he is. While the basic idea of individual freedom which underlies our national government is a political truth, it is neither a social nor a spiritual fact. Before the law of man, and under the divine creative fiat, "all men are created free and equal." But sin came to disrupt the mechanism of social justice and to mar the original handiwork of God, so there is now no actual freedom or equality among men. Until the hope offered the world in Jesus Christ is realized, the right to a natural, healthy birth from pure, strong parents is denied to hosts of children, the desire of the strong to dominate and control the weak will prevail, and the weakened wills of men will be utterly incapable of freeing themselves from bondage to Satan.

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8: 36) contains the sublime truth regarding emancipation, and before one can comprehend the meaning of that declaration, he must willingly and freely have surrendered himself to Christ for redemption from sin unto freedom from the political, social, and moral blight of sin. Whoever has done so, who has been born again, receives his freedom by virtue of the price paid by the Redeemer; hence, as Paul has declared, he becomes a bondsman of Christ, and as such is immediately ushered into the household of God as an *oikonomos* or steward.

He voluntarily enters upon Royal Servitude when he becomes the slave of Jesus, the King of kings.

### I. THE PURCHASE PRICE

Buying and selling, another way of saying trading, is one of the oldest practices of men. Before there were any political units among them, before families had enlarged into clans, and clans into tribes, far back in the remote past men exchanged that about which they cared less for something considered more valuable. Values then, as now, were determined not by a thing's intrinsic worth, but by the desires of human hearts. And these desires were usually determined by the attractiveness and scarcity of an article as well as by its utilitarian value. The natives of New York State exchanged Manhattan Island for a few trinkets and pieces of cloth. An Indian chief would trade his most precious possession for a bottle of whiskey, even as foolish men will do today. One man will pay \$100,000 for a painting, whereas another would not give five dollars for it.

So completely have the ideas of trade dominated the thinking of man that we are compelled to employ them in any study of values. Here indeed the "Theory of Relativity" finds a plane where it can be comprehended by the unscientific mind. Things are valued according to the relation they sustain to other things. Just as distance is a relative term, so value is a relative thing. To know, then, what value God has placed upon the life, influence, labor, love, adoration, praise, and service of man, one must go into the eternal market place and see what God paid in order to redeem unto himself "a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

#### 1. *Prepared in Glory*

Through his infinite knowledge God foresaw the day when man, because of a distorted idea of values, would trade his princely possession in Eden for the speculator's privilege of trying to find something more valuable. And because he foresaw that tragic day, he prepared in ad-



vance a thing of such value, such infinite worth, that it could be offered at the bar of eternal justice in exchange for that which had been sold into slavery to Satan. That this is true is revealed through promises, pictures, and predictions.

(1) *Promises*.—The world's first great tragedy was enacted in Eden when Eve heard the beguiling arguments of Satan and sold out for something which was physically attractive, which appealed to her carnal lusts, and which promised to extend the limits of her experience and knowledge. Immediately following the close of the tragedy, there came upon the stage earth's first great drama. In clear, concise, convincing language, Moses gave us the graphic account of that event. One can readily imagine the scene, for out of his own memory he can restore it in miniature by recalling the time when, as a child, he was caught in some flagrant breach of paternal law and overwhelmed by a sense of shame. For the first time conscious of the gross meaning of sex and experiencing for the first time the consciousness of guilt, Adam and Eve, partially hidden behind the meager protection of fig leaves, groveled before God while he, in accord with the infinite, unchangeable, and inescapable justice of his nature, pronounced the sentence of punishment which was as much a part of the law as the "Thou shalt not eat thereof."

But before putting the sentence into execution, there came from him the great promise which supported the race during the long black night while it struggled out of the abyss into which sin hurled it. "It [the seed of the woman] shall bruise thy [the serpent's] head" (Gen. 3: 15). That promise came forth with clearer meaning when Abraham was told, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 22: 18). It reached its thrilling climax when David was assured that his seed would occupy his throne forever (1 Kings 2: 45), and when Isaiah definitely revealed the vicarious offering to be made by God for man's redemption (Isa. 53).

(2) *Pictures*.—Not only did the promises made to the sin-slaves reveal the certainty of the purchase price, but pictures were given which declared the fact and revealed the nature of the price. When God clothed Adam and Eve in the skins of animals, he gave them a picture of what was involved in their redemption. Blood had to be shed before the physical covering for their nakedness could be provided, and always afterwards has stood the divine ultimatum, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9: 22). In the offering prescribed for the Jewish Passover we have a picture of the price of redemption. A perfect lamb was slain that its blood might mark the subjects of God's elective (selective) grace. The scapegoat (Lev. 16: 21-22) presents another picture of the purchase price to be provided, for upon the head and back of the innocent creature were laid in symbolic way the sins of the people, and the goat was led away to be slaughtered outside the city walls by wild beasts. In these and other pictures we have clearly portrayed the eternal fact that the price God proposed to pay to purchase lost man was "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1: 29). From that awful moment in the long ago when God, having determined to make man also determined to provide for the redemption of man by the sacrifice of his own Son, he, like a mother awaiting the day of execution of an only son, knew the heartache, the poignant, bitter pain which Calvary was to reveal to the world.

(3) *Predictions*.—The prophets, from Moses until the hour when John the Baptist announced the advent of the kingdom of God, foretold the certainty of redemption and revealed in part the plan whereby it was to be purchased. Moses' heart sang when he recorded the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deut. 32). David's heart melted within him when the agony of the cross was flashed before his mind by the Holy Spirit (Psalm 22: 1). Isaiah gloried in the vision of God's worldwide nature (Isa. 6), and when he heard the name of the King proclaimed from heaven (Isa. 9: 6). His

soul must have shuddered as he witnessed long in advance of its enactment the orgy of Golgotha (Isa. 53). Other prophets set down their inspired predictions about the Redeemer, and always they told of one who, though innocent, must suffer for the guilty.

The purchase price provided by God for the redemption of lost man was none other than his only begotten Son whom he freely gave as a substitute at the bar of infinite and eternal justice for everyone who would be willing to be redeemed from bondage to Satan.

## *2. Presented in Humility*

Because the world was to have such utterly false ideas of values, and in order that the eternal purpose of God might be carried out, the coming of Jesus to earth was a stumbling block for all who think in terms of temporal wealth. To the affluent Jews who measured life by money, even as most civilized people have always done, there could be nothing of more value than gold, and whoever did not command the coin of the realm could never be considered as of much value. Hence they utterly failed to appreciate the worth of Jesus. Today, even among the churches, it is difficult to get people to know that moral and spiritual goods alone have true value, and that honesty, industry, sobriety, gentleness, compassion, and sacrificial service, however humbly presented, count with God and men even when there is little money to be given.

The purchase price, prepared by God from before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13: 8), was ushered into the ranks of mankind without any spectacular event other than the serenade of the angels, the announcement made to the shepherds, and the strange star which guided the astrologers from the East to where the babe lay. A simple peasant woman was chosen for his mother. A quaint, insignificant village of the hills was selected as the birthplace of the Son of God, and he came to earth in a goat stall! The first worshipers were not the rich and haughty and proud, but simple shepherds who went

even unto Bethlehem to see the thing which the angels had announced.

### 3. *Paid Amid Agony*

No one has ever known the love of God who has failed to experience, at least in part, the tragedy of Golgotha. When Dr. A. T. Robertson of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary came to teach his class in New Testament Interpretation the lesson concerning the crucifixion, there was a tenseness about him that awed his students. None of us can ever forget the day when he sought to interpret from the Greek text the awful sacrifice, and to make the scene on Calvary live before our minds. What agony was there! What gripping, throbbing, terrifying, stark anguish! What a sensation swept through the universe when the Son of God felt himself utterly isolated by sin, alone in the midst of the vast void wherein even his Father could not comfort him!

(1) The most *horrible form of death* was meted out to his human body. Those taut tendons, the stretching, cracking muscles and nerves, the wrenching, stabbing pains in limbs and back and head! The thirst which came like a sirocco to blast his throat and draw a cry from his thickening lips! The utter isolation from the comfort even of his own loved ones and disciples, while the wicked men for whom he was dying jeered him! The heartache which wrenched him in Gethsemane grew more violent as the hours crawled by. The agony of body increased until he could no longer restrain the cry which came to his lips. His tortured soul, bearing in that awful hour the curse of all sin and wickedness and rebellion, harassed on every side by the old dragon, Satan, at last broke, and there went up the cry which rent the heavens while the earth shuddered and grew dark (Mark 15: 34).

(2) In order to pay the price of sin he must be *obedient unto death*, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2: 8). He drank the last and bitterest dregs of the cup of human woe and despair in order to redeem us from sin. How can one who has accepted salvation from his

hands ever dare to call himself his own? How dare the Christian refuse absolute obedience to his divine will? What stewards we should be, when our stewardship is based upon the payment of such a price!

## II. THE PROCLAMATION

There could be no value in a purchase price set aside but never utilized. The Creator not only provided a redemption, but made it known to the world in such clear and definite terms that even a foolish one can see and follow it. That proclamation reveals three definite facts.

### 1. *Surrender Demanded*

It is axiomatic to say that before a purchase can be made, the object desired must be subject to transfer. In the case of lost man we see his owner, Satan, with no power of physical constraint over his slave, but using the more subtle power of appeal. God desires to possess that man, but because of his own nature and the eternal laws which he has established, he will not coerce the will of the man and thus secure the transfer. The lost man stands alone in the moment of decision, his free will supreme, and he must choose.

I may foolishly put my watch in a pawnshop. As long as I am unable to pay the price of redeeming it, I cannot reclaim it. Should a friend go with me to redeem it for me, the pawnbroker has no recourse against him except to try to persuade me to refuse his offer, to refuse to turn over to him my ticket. Once I have turned over to my friend the ticket and he has paid the redemption price, the pawnbroker must surrender to him the watch. He then is at liberty to restore the watch to me and may name the terms under which the restoration is to be made. In like manner the devil is helpless to do more than to persuade the sinner not to accept the gracious offer of God to redeem his soul from bondage. When he has accepted the offer of God, Satan can do no more, but must surrender his claims upon that life.

Since God alone can provide the means whereby the soul may be redeemed from bondage to Satan, his right to name the conditions under which he will do so is self-evident to every thoughtful person. These conditions are simple yet comprehensive. Briefly stated, they are: (1) *Repentance*.—God cannot redeem the soul of one who does not really desire freedom from bondage to sin. When the lost man realizes the awfulness of separation from God, sincerely grieves over his sinful life and brings himself to where he truly desires to be free, then it is that he is ready to pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Anything less than a realization of what it means to be lost, a sincere sorrow on account of sin and a genuine purpose with the help of God to turn from the practice of sin is not true repentance. (2) *Faith*.—When the lost person has been turned against Satan and truly seeks deliverance from sin, he is given faith (Eph. 2: 8) whereby he is enabled to step forth and surrender himself completely to the mercy and grace of God. His mental belief about Christ becomes more definite and positive, and he is brought into personal living relationship to Christ. (3) *Confession*.—"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10: 10). But to confess means more than merely saying, "I believe that Christ is the Son of God." The noble confession involves an honest declaration from a convinced and surrendered soul that Jesus is the Son of God and a very certain Saviour. It also includes a public proclamation of allegiance to him as Lord and Master of the redeemed soul.

The price of redemption is offered from heaven. Satan seeks to persuade the sinner to refuse the offer. When it is accepted by the lost one who, because of his own free choice has repented, believed, and confessed, the transaction is completed, the soul is set free from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8: 2), and his name is entered in the Book of Life which none can open save the mighty, matchless Lion of the tribe of Judah (Rev. 5: 5). The

purchased possession, a bondslave of Christ, immediately becomes a housekeeper or steward of the manifold grace of God. He thereafter may choose whether he will be a good steward or an unworthy one.

## *2. Sonship Involved*

There has never been any great honor attached to servitude except when the master was of some noble rank. Negro slaves in our country, for the most part, were dejected and hopeless, without any glow of pride in their hearts. But there was genuine compensation for bondage to those who served George Washington, Robert E. Lee, and other such notable masters as they. If, then, we put our relationship to God upon the basis of bondslavery alone, we have just grounds for great pride and rejoicing. Such royal servitude could be no less than honorable to any man.

But that relationship of slave to master is not all of the honor which the redeemed soul has. It is presented only to impress upon us the fact that we have no right to presume, no right to think of ourselves as in any wise free to do as we will. The wonderful thing about the plan of redemption is that, whereas it provides for our purchase from bondage to Satan, it also provides for a more glorious privilege: it makes it possible for the moral law to be satisfied so that the yielded soul may become the seedbed in which the word, nurtured by the Holy Spirit, may spring up into a new creature, "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1: 13). It is, therefore, a son of God by spiritual birth. Such a miracle is promised by God (1 John 5: 1), presented by the authority of Christ (John 3:16-17), and is as permanent as the relation which exists between Christ and the Father (John 10: 27-29; Rom. 8: 38-39). So, then, to be purchased means not only to be redeemed from the curse, but also to have the soul restored to its pristine innocence and power. Can we wonder then that Christ demands his people to be a separate people? (2 Cor. 6: 17.)



### 3. *Service Required*

The third fact revealed in the proclamation is that God expects his people to be true stewards, to protect, enlarge, and utilize the estate entrusted to their care. Nowhere among Christians is there more confusion in thought, a greater variety of tongues, than is found when it comes to a study of the relation of good works to salvation. Specifically the Word declares that good works—charity, peacemaking, honesty, integrity, labor, love, and all others—were prepared aforetime, and the purpose is no less clearly stated, namely: that we should walk in them (Eph. 2: 10).

It is an inescapable axiom of our religion, an inseparable truth of our faith, that our salvation is provided for us out of the infinite grace of God and not because of our good works, or because of any inherent worth we may possess for God's cause. It is no less axiomatic that our good works are (1) *an evidence* of a regenerated nature (James 2: 14), (2) *a proof* of love for God and for Christ who redeemed us (John 14: 15), and (3) *a recognition* on the Christian's part of the obligations incurred when he, of his own free will and choice, allowed Christ to redeem him from Satan.

The proclamation of emancipation, which every regenerate soul accepted before he could have been born again, demanded complete surrender, involved not only his redemption from sin but also his sonship with God, and laid upon him the responsibility of being a true, loyal, diligent, and faithful steward.

### III. THE PROMISE

The Lord of the redeemed soul is not a stern taskmaster, but rather he is a loving, tender, and compassionate Father who makes known his divine will through his Son and interprets that will for the believer through the Holy Spirit. In accepting the purchase price and thus bringing himself under the control of God's Spirit, the sinner has nothing to fear, because he serves a com-



passionate Master, is required to carry an easy load, and is impelled by a commanding and thrilling motive.

### *1. A Compassionate Lord*

In the person of Jesus every disciple has the companionship of one who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities (Heb. 4: 15). His death on the cross is the assurance of infinite love. His words to his disciples, and through them to all mankind, are sufficient to make us know that we may safely trust ourselves to him for guidance. He has promised to guard his own (Heb. 13: 5), and under his protection we need never fear. In hours of distress and disappointment we know that in him we have a sure comfort, and his eternal Spirit is always with us to the end that we may not be tested at any time beyond that which we are able to endure (1 Cor. 10: 13).

### *2. A Comfortable Load*

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light," Jesus declared (Matt. 11: 30). That does not mean that the Christian can pass easily and smoothly along life's road. Nor does it mean that he is to be delivered from trials, temptations, and sorrows. These are necessary as a means of discipline (Psalm 94: 7-15), and essential to our sturdy growth in the Christian life. What he did mean is that the tasks which he gives his followers are not hard, the lessons he requires of them not difficult to master, the load of service not galling to the most tender nature. The nearer one approximates the ideal of Christian perfection set up by Christ, the fewer difficulties will he find along the way and the lesser will be the trials and afflictions that beset him.

### *3. A Compelling Motive*

The best within man is never set free until his spirit is dominated by a burning desire to accomplish something worth while. Jesus, the great psychologist, knew full well the nature of man, and in calling him to the tremendous task of winning a world from sin he pro-

vided him with a motive that is most powerful. He showed him how to do good to himself and how to bring into his life the greatest amount of worth-while things. He revealed to him the possibility of reshaping the social order to the end that men may dwell together in peace and happiness and thus enlarge their fellowship, enrich their living, and find the fullest opportunity for the realization of their most cherished dreams. He ever seeks to fire men's souls with a love that will sanctify all relationships and make of whatever hardships and trials they may encounter steppingstones whereon they may rise to more wonderful living. He holds out before them the hope of making permanent every investment of time and effort they may choose to make. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you" is his statement of a sublime fact. Learn how he was sent, impelled by the desire to save men and enrich their lives, and you have learned to know the motive which will make every hour of service for Christ wondrously rich and joyful.

#### IV. THE POSSESSION

Servitude which offers one nothing but the privilege of seeing another prosper by piling up the goods of mammon can never be happy. The curse of our age is the impossibility of getting men to realize that their ability to purchase and control the time and labor of others should be considered an opportunity for bringing happiness and richness into the lives of those employed, not for squeezing from their hands and lives the last dollar of profits possible. When every industrial and financial magnate, as well as all others, knows the meaning of Christian stewardship, there will speedily come an end to the bitter and relentless warfare between capital and labor, and society will have been given its mightiest forward impulse since man has been on earth. Christ has shown the way, for in his service every steward, every householder, even the lowly *stiweard*, may know that his labors are not in vain in the Lord. When he

reigns completely, the profit motive, the curse of all social relationships, is destroyed, and in its place comes the service motive to enrich all men and sanctify their relationships whatever they may be.

### 1. *Safe Fellowship Assured*

Into the ranks of the world's best the newborn soul is ushered by the Spirit of God. Whenever we think of a church as Christ meant it to be, whenever we consider the Christian brotherhood not as it is but as Christ wants it to be, we know instinctively that in the company of his disciples one will find the finest and safest fellowship of the world. (1) *Socially* one is safe when in it, for if he measures up to the requirements of his Lord and lives among others who do likewise, he can think of no possible way by which his social standing may be injured, his contribution to society fail, or its contribution to the enrichment of his life be turned aside. (2) *Politically* he is safe, for if the world could be dominated by the principles enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount and embodied in the brief but comprehensive summary known as the Golden Rule, there could be no possible place for political corruption and slavery to wicked rulers. The dream which inspires the foolish hearts of anarchists, that of the least possible government, can be realized only when the vast majority of citizens are indeed true stewards of God, for against the Christian graces there is no law (Gal. 5: 22-23). (3) *Morally* the steward of God is lifted above suspicion and doubt, for to obey Jesus is to be morally upright in all things at all times, and to trust him is to go daily to the fountain that saves from sin (1 John 1: 7). What fellowship God offers his bond-slaves! What a thrilling task it is for us to have part in bringing his kingdom ideals to operate freely among men!

### 2. *Secure Holdings*

Few of us, if any, have ever realized the full import of the words of Jesus, "Lay not up for yourselves treas-

ures upon earth" (Matt. 6: 19). Let us imagine a case which illustrates exactly the danger against which he was warning his people. A slave labors diligently and lays aside discreetly. Slowly but surely he piles up in his hiding place coins, trinkets, and other things of value to him, until at last he has a store which he worships. Then there comes to him the day when he is sold to another master. When he leaves his old home, he goes empty handed, for he is allowed to carry off nothing but the few clothes which he wears. Carefully he is searched for anything he may be trying to smuggle away. With a cry of despair, he sees his treasured store confiscated. All his scrimping and saving have been for naught! Even so is it with every soul among men. When death comes, he is allowed to take naught away from earth. If the life has been spent laying by on earth, the cruel, relentless hand of death will see that he leaves it all behind!

It is therefore self-evident that the wise man will store up his treasures where moth and rust cannot corrupt, and where thieves cannot break in and steal. God offers every one of his people a safe storehouse into which he can cast his treasures day by day. In it they cannot decay, for they are spiritual by nature. From it they cannot be stolen, for they are locked in the vaults of eternity. The owner cannot in a moment of weakness trade them off as Esau did his birthright, for they are nontransferable. No physical or financial cataclysm can rob him of them, for they are invested in securities which God has authorized and which are backed by the riches of glory.

### 3. *Successful End*

Every wise man lays his plans so as to compass the whole of life in them. Foolish indeed is he who thinks only of today or tomorrow. Jesus held before us the security of the bird and the certainty of the continuing beauty of the lily, not to teach us to be careless and indifferent for future needs, but to show us the futility and folly of worrying. Even the sparrow works diligently

to fill his crow against the long hours of night, and the cells in the lily are as busy as bees for the duration of their lives, else the glorious crown could never adorn the stem. The steward of God is under divine compulsion to plan and provide for the future, and the Master himself is ready to aid.

The future holds no fear for the loyal Christian, because he faces it with a conscience devoid of offense toward God and man. No one but a true believer, a loyal disciple, can have this peace. He does not do his work primarily for temporal reward, hence never succumbs to grief and despair when he loses this world's goods. He is optimistic and joyous in the midst of every gloomy day, because he has a hope that is both sure and steadfast, grounded in the eternal truth and anchored behind the veil which separates him from the ageless future (Heb. 6: 19). Whether his earnings here on earth are large or small, he is rich, for he lives in anticipation of the day when, as a joint heir with Christ, he shall come into full possession of the heritage of God. He has become a purchased possession. He has learned that life is more than meat and drink, and knows that service for God is indeed worth more than money.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Let the class prepare a list of reasons for claiming that there is no natural freedom for mankind.
2. Compile a list of pictures and symbols in the Old Testament which point to the life, character, ministry, and death of Christ.
3. Why should it be difficult for unsaved people of education and culture to believe in the Christ of the Bible?
4. If possible, secure a copy of *\*The Divine Reason of the Cross*, by Henry C. Mabie, and study carefully at least the first chapter. This book is out of print, but perhaps your pastor has a copy.

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\*Now out of print; see your pastor or library.

5. Exchange with one another your experiences in the hours when you were making the decision to become Christians.
6. Give several reasons why the promises of Christ furnish us with a powerful motive for the highest and noblest living.
7. Make a list of Scripture passages which prove that the possession of the Christian is a secure one.

## CHAPTER II

# THE MASTER'S GLORY

## OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION: The Purpose of Life

#### I. CONSERVATION OF THE BODY

1. Temple of Holy Ghost:  
A unique habitation  
A signal honor
2. Medium of Expression:  
House of the soul  
Threefold capacity  
Complicated organism
3. Delicacy of Mechanism
4. Sin of Abuse:  
Hurtful practices  
The old clock

#### II. CONSECRATION OF SELF

1. Separation for Service  
Two commands  
The Lord's challenge
2. Devotion to Duty:  
(1) Fear God  
(2) Do his bidding
3. Loyalty to Lord:  
Quality of stewardship  
Test of fealty  
A traitor's shame

#### III. CONCENTRATION OF POWERS

1. Toward Self-Control

2. Toward Self-Direction
3. Toward Worthy Ends:
  - (1) Overcoming the world
  - (2) Transforming the world

#### IV. CO-ORDINATION OF MEMBERS

1. The Need of a Plan
2. Lopsidedness Dangerous
  - Wasted energy
  - Brute strength
3. Strength in Union
4. An Invincible Host



CHAPTER II  
THE MASTER'S GLORY  
Stewardship of Life

I am glorified in them—John 17: 10.

INTRODUCTION: The Purpose of Life

To protect the honor of the master is one of the big duties of the *oikonomos*. A faithful servant of an ancient lord not only was proud of his position but also sought at every opportunity to make known the worth of the master and to praise him before the public. Medieval and modern literature abounds with narratives in which servants, gathered together during their leisure hours, vied with one another in praising their chiefs. Jesus expects his bondslaves to be diligent in providing praise for his name. In the epistle to the Ephesians, Paul repeatedly tells us that "we should be to the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1: 12, 14; 2: 7).

In his absence, the master depended upon his slaves to see to it that their conduct and business activities were such that they in no wise would bring disrepute upon him or endanger his cause. Even so Jesus, our divine Master, must depend upon his followers. He has committed to them his inheritance here on earth, his honor, his all! If any glory comes to him, it must be in and through them.

It is by means of our living that we may bring glory to Christ. Life is the priceless possession. Strange, subtle, mystic thing that it is, we are dependent upon it for every privilege, every opportunity that we know. And that life is inseparably bound up with our bodies, the instruments through which our immortal souls express themselves and our personalities are revealed to others. Hence, any consideration of stewardship must include a study of our responsibility for conserving and consecrat-

ing the body, and for concentrating and co-ordinating its powers.

### I. CONSERVATION OF THE BODY

As increasing numbers of devices are created which harm the body and decrease its efficiency, when multitudinous appeals are made to the lusts of the flesh and clamor for the dissipation of our physical and mental powers, when on every hand there are increasing numbers of dangers, every Christian needs to be alert and thoroughly informed to the end that he may not dishonor his divine Lord by allowing evils to mar his body and destroy its effectiveness.

#### 1. *Temple of Holy Ghost*

Paul has given us an interesting study in his declaration that we are the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that God dwelleth in us (1 Cor. 3: 16; 6: 19). In these passages he used the words for sanctuary, most holy place. "Know ye not that . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6: 19-20), and Peter gives us the price that was paid (1 Peter 1: 19). Since God has purchased us, it is his divine right to occupy that which is his, and the Holy Spirit is his agent here on earth occupying the temples or sanctuaries which he has purchased.

"Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 7: 48). What a *unique habitation* our God has chosen! For ages men and women thought to make for him temples of wood and stone. Across the pages of history one may see the evidences of man's futile efforts to confine God to some sacred spot. Incalculable wealth has been invested in places of worship. Shrines to gods of every kind have dotted the face of the earth. Yet during all the centuries God has been seeking to make known the fact that he wishes to dwell in human bodies, a companion of living souls.

In a message delivered in 1924 to a Bible class in Belmont Heights Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee,

"Old Sawney" Webb, founder of the famous Webb School for boys at Bell Buckle, Tennessee, spoke of the foolish efforts of man to limit the presence of God to buildings and shrines, and declared, "Every great social cataclysm in history has been preceded by extravagant expenditures on temples of worship and in the burial of the dead." His words were spoken in connection with a warning to the class against the folly of seeking to serve God merely by building houses of worship or by lavishing wealth upon the dead. God's unique abiding place on earth is in the body of the regenerated human being.

What a *signal honor* it is to have such a Guest! We delight to receive notable persons into our homes. Shrines are made of the houses that have sheltered great men. Mt. Vernon, Arlington, The Hermitage, and other places are visited annually by throngs of people who go to them because they once had as their inmates and guests some of the world's greatest men. If the presence of a great man can honor a building, how much more can the presence of God's Spirit honor these frail bodies of ours! And with such a guest abiding with us, what pains we should take to keep the building clean and holy!

## *2. Medium of Expression*

Inside the body dwells that marvelous creation known as the soul. Upon the body it depends for its every expression. The world knows it only as it is presented through the physical body. Inside the horseshoe magnet lies some mysterious force which man has called magnetism. It cannot be defined; it cannot be understood except through what it does. And it can no more manifest itself without a metallic body than the human soul can manifest itself without the body of flesh.

The body is capable of development, of control and of adaptation. A baby learns some of its first lessons in seeking to discover the house in which it lives and to adapt the body to its own uses. It plays with its hands and feet; it scratches its face, pulls its hair and often injures itself before it discovers what the body is and the

relationship between its conscious self and the body. Slowly but surely, if the child is healthy, the body grows; and if the child is normal mentally, the body is brought under control and its parts adapted to their particular uses. In proportion as the body develops and is controlled does the soul within have capacity for revealing itself to the world through worthy deeds.

These bodies of ours are infinitely more complicated than any machine. Inside is the most wonderful communication system known to man, the nerves, and the earth's strangest chemical laboratory wherein food is transformed into bone, muscle, sinew, hair, nails, skin, and numerous other forms of tissue. It contains the most marvelous pumping station. The heart of a normal adult makes 4,320 strokes every hour, forcing fifteen gallons of blood through the circulatory system. Sometimes it operates for eighty years, during which time it moves something like 120,000,000 pounds of blood! No air-conditioning and ventilation plant on earth can compare with the nose, lungs, and skin. The most carefully gauged thermostat is installed in the body to regulate its heat which is produced by a mystic furnace burning oxygen captured by microscopic stokers from the lungs. The only perfect self-adjusting lens known to man is in the eye; the most sensitive sound detector is in the ear. And upstairs, inside a well-protected chamber, lives the brain, that mysterious organ which has fascinated and baffled scientists of every stage of civilization, and which grows more mysterious with each passing decade. Stupendous miracle it, for the more it reveals to mankind about everything else, the further it shrinks within its bony cavity, seeming to hide itself from the mind whose seat it is.

### 3. *Delicacy of Mechanism*

The human body is the most delicate piece of mechanism known. Unless crippled by accident or disease, or marred by sin, it constitutes a perfect unity. Try as one may, he cannot imagine a better body in which to live. Mysterious indeed is the manner in which it functions.

Incredible is the number of living organisms which compose it. Bound up under one protecting covering are the originals of all mechanical marvels, each perfectly adapted to its own ends, and all blended under the direction of the nerve centers into a matchless system.

There is wonderful harmony in this body and in the functions thereof. No part seeks to encroach upon the duties of another part. Every portion labors incessantly for every other. It is not strange that Paul chose it as an illustration, a metaphor, of the church (1 Cor. 12: 13-31). If the members of a church could ever come to dwell together with as much harmony and labor together with as much efficiency as the members of the human body do, a sudden and tremendous impetus would be given the cause of Christ.

#### 4. *Sin of Abuse*

Every American youth who knows the history of Mt. Vernon would resent bitterly any desecration of the building by vandals. Everyone who has a home, however humble it may be, will not allow it to be ravaged by careless or evil people. Instinctively we turn to defend such places against damage. Since, then, the body is the temple of the soul and of the Holy Spirit, and upon its beauty, symmetry, and functioning depends the honor of the Lord, every Christian should learn to know what a tragedy it is when he allows his body to be damaged by sinful practices, by violation of the natural laws of the Creator.

There are many abuses which human beings inflict upon their bodies, and Christians are often guilty of them. Its symmetry is marred by carelessness in posture and by one-sided training. The right side usually is far better developed than the left, and for no other reason than that we do not try to develop both sides alike. Shoulders are stooped, the gait is slovenly, the back is deformed, our teeth are decayed, our eyes weakened, our hearing impaired, because of failure to respect the temple in which we live. Often, because of carelessness, members

are crippled or destroyed, and the soul is deprived of the use of them in expressing itself to the world. Indulgence of the appetite, eating and drinking unnecessary or injurious foods and concoctions, the use of narcotics, especially tobacco, caffeine, and alcoholic drinks, the excitement of night life, wild parties, revelings in public places as well as in our homes—these and many other practices weaken the body, sap its vitality, destroy the harmony, and leave the soul and its guest, the Holy Spirit, handicapped by lack of a proper medium through which to express themselves.

A friend of mine tells a story of an incident which occurred in his childhood. He was sent out to cut some kindling. In the woodshed was the mahogany case of a beautiful old grandfather clock. He did not know the value of it. No one had told him what it was or why it was. Hence, in his haste to prepare the wood, he pulled over that piece of furniture, drove the axe into its dainty sides, slashed and cut until it was reduced to splinters. What would today be worth hundreds of dollars and would give delight to thousands of people was wrecked by the ignorance of an untrained lad. That incident has been forgotten by all except the man into whom the lad grew. But when one of us, either out of ignorance or through stubborn will, wrecks the body in which he lives, breaks and crushes and weakens the members, and thus makes it impossible for the Spirit of God to have its best use, he is guilty of a breach of trust that the Lord cannot overlook. Hence, as surely as he lives on, he will be chastened by physical suffering for being such an unworthy steward of his body.

## II. CONSECRATION OF SELF

Not only is the Lord glorified in our bodies when they are kept well and strong; he is honored more by our being consecrated, body, mind and soul, to his service. This requires separation, devotion to duty, and loyalty to our Owner.

### 1. *Separation for Service*

There comes to every Christian a time when he is confronted by a momentous decision. It is the hour when he realizes the difference between Christian duty and disloyalty to Christ. The commands of God to his people may be summed up in two words, "Come" and "Go." "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6: 17), is but another way of saying, "Come, follow me." The servant of God cannot evade the command. Neither can he fail to hear the other word. "Go tell my disciples and Peter," was the first resurrection order. "Go . . . make disciples," was the last command before the ascension (Matt. 28: 19 ASV). One must decide whether he will come out for Jesus, leaving the world with its sins at whatever cost; and he must as surely decide whether he will obey by going forth to live in such a way that he can lead people to become followers of his Lord. Consecration of self to the challenging task of being a worthy servant of Christ is no easy thing to bring about, but before one can glorify the Master he must definitely decide to undertake it.

Youth has that within which responds to a challenge. "I dare you" has stirred countless millions of young hearts and sent legions on dangerous missions. It is to the spirit of heroism that God always appeals. From the hour when Isaiah, then a young man, realized the universal nature of God (Isa. 6) and answered the question, "Who will go for us?" by crying, "Send me!" even until now God has offered to youth the most alluring and fascinating fields of adventure and conquest. The world has spent all its past efforts seeking to conquer the natural obstacles. Untold millions of men have died in battles. Other millions have died fighting against an unfriendly nature. We have made marked progress in some lines, but the matchless field opened to Isaiah in the long ago has hardly been entered. The effort to reveal to all men the true God and to free the race from



the galling bondage of sin is hardly begun. If it is ever completed, the disciples of Christ must remember the terms which he laid down, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mark 8: 34).

### 2. *Devotion to Duty*

In any study of Christian stewardship one is prone to ask, "What is my duty?" The answer is given in the Bible in plain words. "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12: 13). Duty then is twofold: (1) *To fear God*, not with the awe of a pagan approaching a heathen shrine, or with the stark terror of a savage watching the lightning rive some forest tree; but with that subtle, inexplicable reverence one feels when he draws back from displeasing one who is dearly beloved and who, while holding the power to bless, also has the power to chastise; who not only can smile, but whose frown also one does not wish to see. With fear of that kind in one's heart, wisdom has her beginning (Prov. 1: 7), and she leads on to obedience to the commands which the Father has given. Everyone who wishes to know his duty will go to the Word of God for information. (2) Always, everywhere, at whatever cost, the servant of Christ must be willing *to do his bidding*, for to do less inevitably dishonors him who has bought us from bondage to Satan.

### 3. *Loyalty to Lord*

*The Quality of Stewardship* is determined by the limits to which the servant will go in safeguarding the interests committed to his hands by the Master. Loyalty to Jesus requires that his follower be faithful at every point, true to every trust, steadfast in every trial. ". . . Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord . . ." (1 Cor. 15: 58) is no uncertain command. Any lesser ideal of service would be unworthy the bondsman of Christ. To go less than the full limit of one's ability in serving the Redeemer is to render a service unworthy of our profession. Herein is also the *Test*



of *Fealty*, for if there is any lack of devotion on the part of a Christian, any halfhearted fidelity, he cannot be expected to remain firm amidst temptation and trials.

Jesus warned Peter that Satan desired to sift him (Luke 22: 31), yet the impulsive man heeded not. He thought he knew himself. But the hour when he should have been steadfast and unmovable found him cringing before the ridicule of a pretty, daring woman whose sneers made him forget whom it was he served. Such an hour is apt to come to any Christian. Young people are always subject to it. To live so that in such a crisis one can withstand the shock and come out unscathed in moral fiber is the supreme achievement for the child of God, and does more to glorify the Lord than all vain boasting.

Our country was but a struggling infant among the mighty nations of the earth when Benedict Arnold was placed in command of the Continentals at West Point. They were dark days during which autocratic rulers were struggling against the advance of freedom. The gallant, youthful general held a strategic position and was trusted by his commander-in-chief, General Washington. But he could not stand the test imposed upon him by the glibtongued André. The lure of gold—\$30,000 of English money!—and the lust of his disloyal heart for what it would purchase blinded his eyes to the glory of loyalty, to the vision of immortal fame to be won by sacrifice, to the shame of betraying a sacred trust. All night he fought against the appeal of his baser nature and lost! In the morning he surrendered and, with his coveted gold in store, made his way to England where he died in utter disgrace and loneliness amid the people whose money he had taken.

No shame can equal *A Traitor's Shame*. No disgrace can surpass the ignominy of him who betrays his own country and kind for a few fleeting years of promised pleasure. If, then, mankind so abhors one who will betray his country, what must be the attitude of God

toward one who espouses his cause and then betrays him in order to win a few months or years of sensuous, worldly pleasure? Benedict Arnold died an estranged, penniless citizen of the United States. The Christian who betrays his trust, who sells out for pleasures of the world, will die an estranged citizen of the kingdom of Christ, a penniless pauper, saved as if by fire (1 Cor. 3: 15).

### III. CONCENTRATION OF POWERS

It is not enough for the disciple of Christ, the *oikonomos* of God, merely to conserve his body and consecrate himself. He must also strive so to control his body and direct his life that he may render the most effective service possible to his Lord. His powers must be concentrated upon a threefold objective:

#### 1. *Toward Self-Control*

Everyone who has seen the pasture of a horse breeder knows what a thing of beauty is *an unbridled* colt as it gambols upon the greensward of a velvety meadow. The owner delights in it while it grows into a strong, sturdy horse. He shows it to his friends and boasts about its fine points. But the hour will come, unless the colt can be taught to control itself and to yield to the master's will, when the horsejockey will be called in and the beautiful animal turned over to him to be starved and manhandled until its fine spirit is broken or it has been killed.

Tragedy stalks abroad throughout the world wherever there are men and women who have not learned to control themselves. The besotted inebriate, the leering opiate addict, the shameless denizens of darkness in cities, the brazen wreck of womanhood flaunting her shame in the face of the law and of decent people, the hordes in prison cells—these and many more are but once spirited youths who might have lived before thousands of cheering admirers; but they would not be bridled; they never learned self-control.

## *2. Toward Self-Direction*

Self-control is not enough, however, to bring success in life. One of the cleanest, most upright, well-behaved men I ever knew never got anywhere in life because he did not know how to direct his talents toward any worthy end. They who honored him most for his fine conduct pitied him most because of his negative life. He just did not do things! It is the duty of the Christian to learn how to bring his talents into play along definite lines.

The soul is much like a mariner. If he knows the mechanism of a ship but does not know how to get out of the harbor, he is a poor and useless navigator. All the throbbing power down in the bowels of the great liner waits his directing mind and hand. Until he can give them, he has no right to pose as a pilot. Even so is it with the human being. He may be trained in mind; he may know his body and all about its power; he may be able to control the physical machine with master hand and bring any impulse under subjection to his will. But until he has learned how to steer his body, his ship of destiny, out from the pier into the high seas of adventure and there direct it while pushing on, he is no worthy creature of God. This he can never learn unless he accepts the Bible as his spiritual chart and compass, takes his soundings through honest, sincere prayer, turns the eye of faith outward, pushes away from anchorage, and sets forth to do things for his Master.

## *3. Toward Worthy Ends*

Any young person can learn self-control and may be able to direct himself in life's game. But he who would glorify Christ must know that it is not enough just to press forth in search of high adventure. He must go forth directed by the Spirit of God to attain worthy ends. The goal for every servant has been set up by his Lord. It is the conquest of a world for Christ (Matt. 28: 19). No temporal success should ever satisfy a human being. Certainly it can never satisfy a child of God. Hence, one needs early to know that the attain-

ment of temporal success alone is no worthy goal. Two things are involved in the conquest of the world by Christian workers: (1) *Overcoming the world*, making oneself master of its physical forces and proof against its seductions; (2) *transforming the world* by the preaching of the gospel and the application of its principles to all departments of life. It is as impossible for one to do these things without being led of God as it would be for an unskilled laborer to build a palace without the guidance of an architect.

Too long has the test of the world been made in terms of secular values. Moses and Joshua failed according to the verdict of their day; but according to the verdict of history they succeeded gloriously. Jesus failed according to the men who said "He saved others; himself he cannot save"; but history declares that he achieved more than any other man ever achieved. Paul was pronounced a miserable failure by his former contemporaries in the Jewish Sanhedrin; but today they are seldom mentioned, while the name of Paul resounds throughout the earth. Who shall say what is success for the Christian—Christ or the secular world? If Christ is to say, then there is nothing for the Christian to do but to obey him and to consecrate his every talent toward the accomplishment of his divine will here on earth.

#### IV. CO-ORDINATION OF MEMBERS

Harmony is essential to the successful operation of any machine or social organization. Perfect self-control and self-direction presuppose the existence of harmonious relations among the parts. The true steward of God will strive, therefore, to bring all his physical powers and all his talents into one harmonious unity, directed by a spirit-led will for the purpose of accomplishing that which will glorify the Lord. To do this he must realize the importance of four things:

##### 1. *The Need of a Plan*

Loose machinery never renders any service. An auto

junk yard is about the most desolate looking place one can find. In it one sees pieces of machinery, disjointed engines, and broken and distorted caricatures of what were once splendid machines. But a mechanic goes into it, gathers together disjointed pieces, and in the end may unite them into a car that will render valuable service. Likewise, it is a sorry sight when one sees men and women whose physical, mental, and spiritual powers are all out of joint. But once the Great Mechanic is allowed to have his way, the uncontrolled, unrelated members and talents may be shaped up into a marvelous whole, capable of effective service.

Paul's program for co-ordinating his members was to buffet his body and bring it into subjection to his will (1 Cor. 9: 27). In other words, he treated it exactly like a trainer treats a young horse. He controlled it to the end that it might serve him in his ministry. Paul did not relish the idea of being a physical wreck, of being cast away because of a diseased body, before he had ended his labors for the Lord. He entered upon a program of systematic training, thus adapting his body to the ends for which it was created. He wanted the Holy Spirit to have a fit temple in which to dwell and so planned to provide it.

## 2. *Lopsidedness Dangerous*

Nothing is more dangerous for youth than to be careless and uncertain about the development of his physical and spiritual powers. There are two extremes among those who seek to prepare themselves for service. One of them is to develop the physical until it is abnormal. Seldom does a professional athlete ever become a great thinker. Brute strength alone never made a great soldier of the cross. The other extreme is that of developing the mind to the hurt of the body. A "bookworm" is usually about as incapable of rendering effective service to humanity as is an overdeveloped athlete. Between the two extremes lies the happy medium, and every Christian will want to find it and be governed by its rules.

### 3. *Strength in Union*

Nature teaches every observing person the value of unity. The hand possesses its strength and cunning because there is unity in service among its members instead of oneness in being. No stretch of the imagination could picture one hand and arm as effective for our needs as are two well-developed ones. Likewise in our churches, Christ knew that unity among individuals, who surrender of their own accord certain rights for the sake of co-operation with others and are bound together and directed by the same Spirit, would result in the most effective and efficient work possible for a company of believers. Nowhere is there any intimation that he ever expected this unity to be brought about by political or ecclesiastical power. It must be a unity in spirit in order to conform to his will. Every good servant of the Master will, therefore, always gladly surrender any personal desire that may bring confusion into the body of Christ of which he is a member, and will seek to act in harmony with all the members so as to render the largest possible service for the glory of him who is the Head of the church.

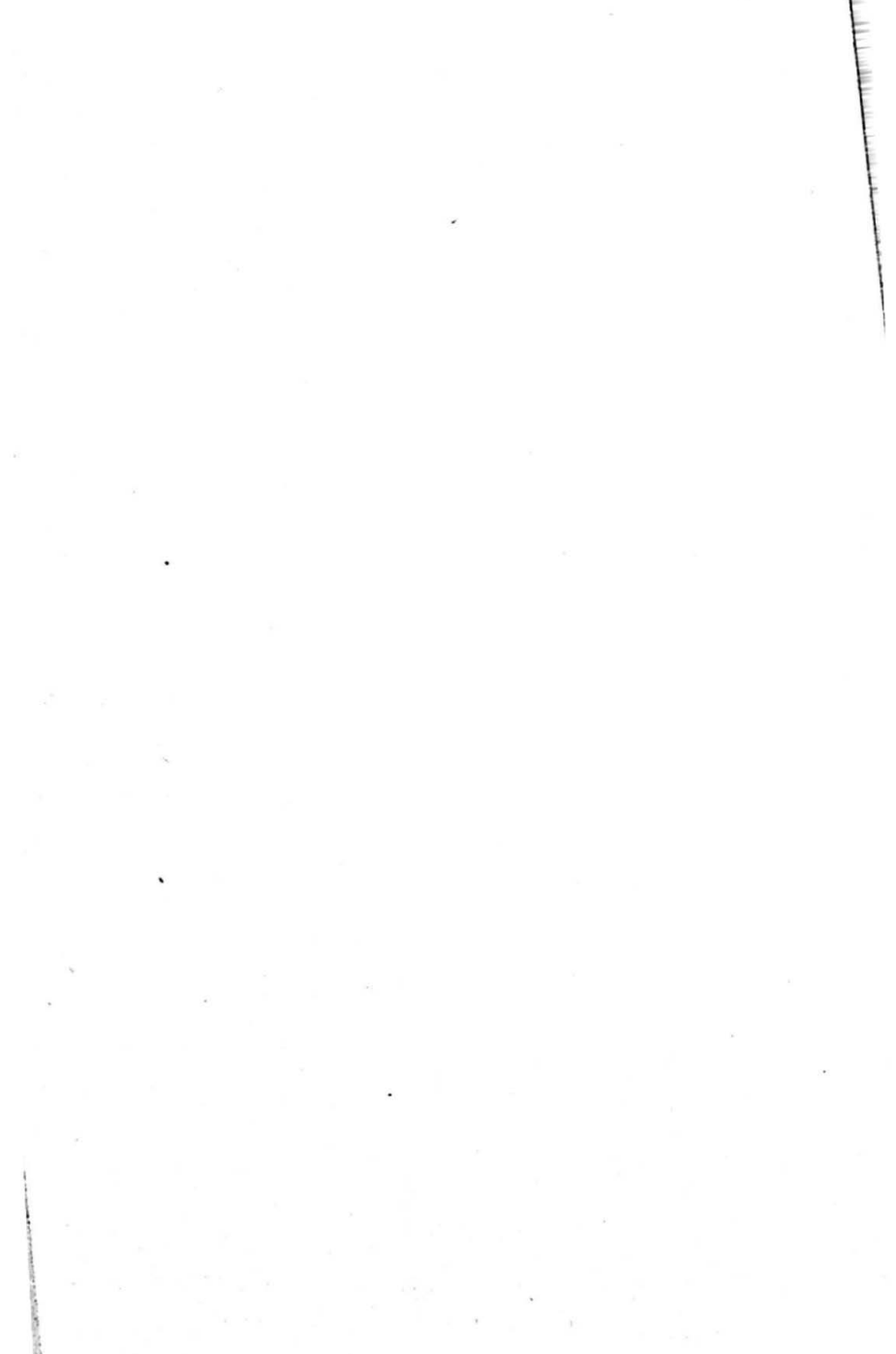
### 4. *An Invincible Host*

Is there one who can imagine just what might be accomplished by a true Christian if only the whole being could be brought into the oneness for which it was created? If the body could be grown from infancy without the blight of sinful practices and evil habits; if it could be brought into subjection to the will, and that will be dominated only by the highest ideals, inspired by the loftiest motives, and empowered by supernatural grace; if that will were seated in a brain kept pure from vile reading, low thoughts, and vulgar language, and trained for service as the athlete trains his body; and along with it all, if there were a soul born from above and yielded completely to the guidance of the Holy Spirit; if there could be such a Christian, what a miracle he would be!

Why are there not many such disciples of Christ? Why are we all not of that kind? The cruel answer stares us in the face every time we honestly ask the question: we do not want to be that kind of a Christian. If we desired it strongly enough, if we coveted the best gifts earnestly enough, we would be willing to pay the price of achievement and thus present our bodies unto God living sacrifices, consecrated with all their capacities and talents to his service and for his glory.

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Some delightful fiction, giving a picture of slave life, will be enjoyed by reading *In the Land of Cotton*, by Dorothy Scarborough. This book is out of print, but perhaps your library has a copy.
2. Prepare a list of harmful foods and drinks, and over against it put a list of necessary foods and drinks; then compute the cost of the hurtful to you individually.
3. Read the account of the martyrdom of John Huss and Jerom of Prague in *Fox's Book of Martyrs*.
4. Give the account of the "sifting of Peter" which Jesus foretold.
5. Draw a parallel between the proper training for an athlete and that for a Christian worker.
6. How does the best use of the body depend upon complete control of its members?
7. Make out a daily schedule that would be good for the youth to follow during his years of physical and mental development.
8. Show why dissipation, whether in eating and drinking, or in amusements and exercise, prevents a Christian from doing his best to glorify Christ.





### **CHAPTER III**

## **THE MASTER'S HONOR**

### **OUTLINE**

#### **INTRODUCTION : A Parable and Its Application**

#### **I. ENTRUSTED TO HIS SERVANTS**

1. The People's Bible:  
Not word but life  
An unclosable book  
A deacon converted
2. The Master's Hope:  
Fact, not fiction  
Reliable testimony
3. The Servant's Responsibility:  
(1) A clean uniform  
(2) A good rating  
(3) A constant vigilance

#### **II. ENDANGERED BY MISCONDUCT**

1. The Devil's Wiles:  
(1) Fictitious values  
(2) Vain show  
(3) Deception of riches  
(4) Profit, not service
2. Questions of Conduct:  
The rule  
The judges  
The standard
3. A Marred Reproduction
4. Tragedy of Misrepresentation

#### **III. ENHANCED BY LOYALTY**

1. Paul's Noble Example

**2. Building a Reputation:**

- (1) At what cost?
- (2) For what purpose?
- (3) To what extent?

**3. What Price Glory?****IV. ENJOYED BY THE FAITHFUL**

1. The Expansion of His Realm
2. Enlarged Fellowship
3. Catching Reflected Glory
4. The Regal Partnership

**CHAPTER III**  
**THE MASTER'S HONOR**  
**Stewardship of Influence**

Hallowed be thy name—Matthew 6:9.

**INTRODUCTION: A Parable and Its Application**

Once upon a time a handsome, dashing man courted and won the hand of a splendid young woman. He proudly boasted of his good fortune and pledged that he would make her a renowned woman, that her fame would be known throughout all the region because of what he would do for her. But shortly after their wedding he began to be negligent, slowly deserted her, and at last in rags, her body weakened by hunger, her spirit crushed, she died of loneliness, heartache, and disappointment. Instead of being honored by him, she had been disgraced.

Now hear the explanation of the parable. A young person espouses the cause of Christ and unites with his church. During the glow of the revival meeting and of the first glad hours of the experience of salvation, he tells of what he is going to do for the Lord and for his church. When he asks for membership in the church, he pledges that he will live according to its rules, help to maintain its service and worship, and strive to live a consistent Christian life. The months go by, and he ceases to be attentive to church. He seldom attends services, gives little or nothing to the work and, for all he seems to care, would gladly see the church languish and die. Where is the difference between his conduct and that of the imaginary bridegroom? Surely the disciples of Christ should know the meaning of Emerson's words, "What you are stands over you . . . and thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary."

The honor of our Lord Jesus is committed to the hands of his disciples. He is known by what they do and say,

by the way they live. Their influence is greater than their words, their expression more potent than their profession. Every *oikonomos* who breathes the Lord's Prayer should, therefore, covet the privilege of developing such personal influence as will help answer the petition, "Hallowed be thy name." To do this he must come to realize four important things about that honor.

### I. ENTRUSTED TO HIS SERVANTS

The Master's glory is realized through his followers. His honor is entrusted to their hands for safekeeping. They are the "people's Bible" and the Master's hope.

#### 1. *The People's Bible*

Few people read the Word of God. Satan uses all his wiles to prevent them from desiring to engage in such profitable study. If, therefore, the masses are to know about God and to understand him well enough to want to be obedient unto his divine commands, they are dependent upon Christians for their information about him and the nature of his redeeming grace. It is *not word but life* that counts with most people. Loyal disciples should covet the privilege of living so that others may see in them the reflection of the divine image and, seeing it, be led to discover the source from which it comes.

*It is an unclosable book.* Seek how we may, there is no way by which we may close this strange book. At every turn someone is reading it. Always the critical eye is seeking for some flaw in the revelation which is presented through the life of the professed Christian. If it conforms to the will of God and manifests the character of Jesus, the most wicked man will quickly discern it. If it does not, he will be even more sensitive to the fact. Every Christian is endowed with capacity to represent Jesus aright and thereby preserve his honor and enhance his power over others. Every Christian has, on the other hand, the ability to misrepresent Jesus. How he lives will determine just what kind of a witness he will be.

No glasses are required for one to read this "people's Bible," no teacher is needed to enable one to con its pages. It is always an open book to be read by anyone who cares to do so. The reader does not even need to know his *a-b-c's*. Even the blind man soon learns what is written in it. There is indeed a heavy responsibility resting upon the shoulders of every disciple of Christ, for he carries around with him at all times, and everywhere, the testimony which either enhances the honor of the Lord or else besmirches it.

An old story illustrates just how others read our lives. The deacon of a church went to his pastor, discouraged, dissatisfied, unhappy. "I want you to present my resignation to the church," he said. "I no longer want to be a deacon, because I don't think I am fit to be one." The pastor asked if he would be willing to do one thing before the resignation was presented to the church, and he agreed to undertake it.

He was sent to the home of a poor widow who, with her three small children, was on the verge of starvation. At the pastor's suggestion he took with him a load of coal, much good food, some candy, fruit, and a few toys. When he saw the joy of the poor mother and the unbounded delight of the children, his soul had a new experience. He lingered long in the home and led the family in a brief devotional service. When he was leaving, he paused a moment just outside the door, and during that brief interval heard one of the little ones ask, "Mother, was that Jesus come to see us?" The next day he hunted up his pastor, revoked the request for his resignation and said: "I have just discovered what has been wrong with me. I've been hiding Christ from others."

Every Christian has the privilege of living and serving in such a way that the saved and unsaved may see Jesus in him, and it is for that purpose that he has been purchased. The most beautiful volume ever issued is the daily life of a consecrated Christian. The most potent

testimony in favor of Christ is such a life. The unanswerable argument for the reality of our faith is this "Bible." The good servant of Jesus will never allow its pages to be marred, its testimony to be distorted, or its sacred message to be hidden from them who need most to know it.

## 2. *The Master's Hope*

"Ye shall be my witnesses," said Jesus just before his ascension. His hope lies in our willingness to be true witnesses for him, and this we cannot do if our actions belie our words. A cartoon may teach a truth, but most often they who see it never discover the truth because of the grotesque manner in which it is presented. Likewise, the Christian may present truth about Jesus, but if his life is a caricature of the life of the Lord, people will fail to see the truth. *Fact, not fiction*, is what counts when we bear witness for Christ. In any court the fundamental principle governing testimony is that it must be direct. Thousands of times attorneys have called out their objections to indirect testimony, and their objections have been sustained by the judges. Fundamentally, then, the only testimony which the disciple can render with assured effect is that which grows out of his own experience. Jesus depends upon us for his vindication before the court of human opinion, and if we sustain his honor, we must give the court direct, positive evidence which can only come out of the life of one who really abides in him.

Furthermore, the servant is under obligation to make his *testimony reliable*. It is good and right for one to go to church services. One never hears a Christian using profane language in the house of worship. One would not expect to worship by engaging in a dance or a bridge party. What would be the sensation created if your pastor should appear with a jazz band and put on the pulpit a group of seminude dancers? Even the mind of the most lukewarm Christian recoils at the suggestion of such things. Yet the unsaved people are as vitally af-

fectured by our lives outside the meetinghouse as they are by what we do during the Sunday services. If, therefore, our senses are shocked by the thought of such secular performances in the house of God, how can we expect the unsaved not to be shocked at us when we engage in them in other places? What I am and do every day determines the credibility of my word when I give my public testimony for Christ. There is but one safe rule for the Christian to follow and that is, "Never do or say anything anywhere or any time which I could not gladly see done or hear said in the house of worship."

### 3. *The Servant's Responsibility*

The bondsman of Christ, knowing that his life is an open book before the world, should realize that he is responsible for preserving the record from being marred or distorted. If he does this, he must bear in mind three important facts: (1) *A clean uniform* is an essential part of the equipment of a good soldier. Every such warrior takes pride in being immaculate when inspection day comes around. Every day is inspection day for the soldier of the cross; hence he should always keep himself clean. (2) *A good rating* is also an invaluable asset for the servant. Like a horde of termites in the foundations of a house, suspicion undermines one's reputation and destroys the bases of confidence. Every false step in living, every crooked turn in thinking and every unguarded word in conversation are apt to create suspicion which, in the end, will destroy the confidence of others in him who allows them.

(3) *A constant vigilance* is the basis of success in Christian living. To be caught off guard in a moment of danger is fatal. We are admonished to think on things that are honest, things that are just, things that are of good report (Phil. 4: 8). We are commanded to give diligence to show ourselves approved of God (2 Tim. 2: 15 ASV). We are urged to "watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation" (Matt. 26: 41). There is freedom from disrepute only in "eternal vigilance"; and in our

freedom from condemnation by the world we have our glorious opportunity for bringing honor to the Lord of our Christian household. The wise disciple begins every day's activities by a period of meditation, Bible reading, and prayer, thus putting himself on guard against the dangers that lurk along the way.

## II. ENDANGERED BY MISCONDUCT

Enough has been said and written about the damaging influence of unchristlike conduct to suffice for all purposes, if only what has been said and written were heeded. But, like any other kind of teaching, it needs to be repeated. "Precept upon precept; line upon line" (Isa. 28: 10) is the divine plan for imparting knowledge. We may, therefore, well take time for a brief review of the way the Christian's misconduct affects the honor of Christ.

### 1. *The Devil's Wiles*

Paul tells us "We are not ignorant of Satan's devices" (2 Cor. 2: 11). That is true, yet there are hosts of Christians who do not profit from their knowledge about the methods he uses in destroying their influence and thus bringing dishonor on their Lord. The most subtle of these are: (1) *Fictitious values*.—The fruit seemed good to Eve—to look at, to eat, and to make her wise. The fictitious value placed upon it by Satan lured her into partaking of it in violation of the command of God. Every evil practice and every sinful amusement are indulged in and every departure from the straight and narrow way of Christian living is made only after the gullible disciple has been deceived into thinking it more worth while than strict conformity to the will of God.

(2) *Vain show*.—"I must do so-and-so because others do it" is an excuse often heard from wayward Christians. "I saw how beautiful and attractive it was, and I took it" is the answer many a thief gives when asked for a reason for his crime. Satan knows how like foolish butterflies many people are, hence places before them



things that are gaudy, brilliant, sensuous, alluring, and enticing; and then he stands with wicked delight while the poor, unthinking souls entangle themselves only to have their reputations marred, their influence as Christians weakened or destroyed, and their souls crippled for effective service in the church and the denomination.

(3) *The deception of riches* is another seductive lure used by Satan in ruining the lives of Christians. He has slowly but surely built up through the centuries a social system constructed upon the shifting sands of money-values. But money is only a medium created by governments for the purpose of enabling people to make their exchanges of goods and service without having to go to the trouble of moving bulky articles. It is determined by governmental fiat, not by actual values. To manufacture a ten-dollar bill actually costs our government a few mills, a hundred-dollar bill perhaps one cent, a thousand-dollar bond not more than five cents. Riches are measured in terms of dollars, and dollars have their value only so long as the government is stable and secure and run by honest citizens. History reveals the utter folly of worshiping wealth. It is so often amassed only to become an idol and then to be lost. Like a will-o'-the-wisp it lures the covetous soul into the swamps of sin, selfishness, and greed, and then vanishes.

(4) *Profit, not service*, is the thing that makes money a curse. Every great economic cataclysm that has struck the world and every financial depression that civilized society has known could have been averted if only people had been taught to live for the purpose of rendering true service to their fellows instead of being taught, as we have all been, to live and work in order to make money. When the profit motive in industry, in finance, in government, everywhere, has been destroyed by the teachings of Jesus Christ, and in its place has arisen through the same teachings the service motive, then indeed will the lure of money have been mightily crippled. Only then may the whole industrial, economic, and

financial structure of society be rebuilt so as to end strife and warfare and prevent depressions which so often have held the world in their cruel grasp.

## 2. *Questions of Conduct*

"Is it wrong for me to do this?" Young people, middle-aged people, and old people ask the question when there is something they desire to do, yet find their consciences objecting to it. There is one safe rule for every Christian to follow. It is, "If in doubt, don't." Everyone needs to know what the Bible teaches about right conduct, to be honest enough to find out what results come from indulgence in questionable amusements and practices, and to be noble enough to refuse to be enticed by anything that will not honor Christ and enable one to be a true witness for him.

There are *four judges* of conduct: oneself, the unsaved, the disloyal Christian, and the true disciple of Christ who will not be led into doing things that injure his power to correctly represent the Lord before the world. One may select any one of these witnesses to sustain his own opinion about things that are questionable, but he may be sure that he will always get the truth only from the last. Occasionally there is an ungodly person whom the devil has not been able to control. If one asks the worst sinner in the community if a Christian should drink, gamble, revel in wild parties, desecrate the sabbath and do other such things, he will perhaps get a positive and correct answer. But from all who indulge in such things, whether church members or not, he will usually get the answer Satan wants him to have.

Keep in mind that there is but *one standard* for conduct laid down by the Lord of glory. That standard demands that the Christian keep himself unspotted from the world (James 1: 27); "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess. 5: 22); and "... lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, ..." (Heb. 12: 1). One cannot indulge in worldly amusements,

there mixing and mingling with the ungodly, and remain unspotted. He had as well talk about going down a chimney without getting soot on his clothes. He cannot abstain from every appearance of evil unless he keeps himself from the places where evil is rife. He cannot lay aside the sins of the world by going where they are. The honor of Christ is more precious to a true believer than any good time the world may offer; hence, he will not be found where sinful practices prevail, will not do things for which he has to offer an apology.

### 3. *A Marred Reproduction*

Every Christian should manifest the nature of Christ. His character should be like Christ's, his conduct such as will truly represent Christ. No one likes to have a photograph which distorts his features. A photographer who cannot make a true likeness of his customers, and even touch up the negatives so as to make the pictures flatter a little, will soon go out of business. Would it not be well for us to ask what reproductions of Jesus we are presenting to the world, just how much we are distorting the divine image which we show to other people through our own lives? The picture of Christ which we show the world is prepared in the dark room of the individual heart where none else can go, and when the reproduction is brought forth it cannot be changed. The place where the devil strikes is in the secret life where the negative is developed and the reproduction is determined.

During the noted trial of the kidnaper of America's baby, Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr., a strange bit of evidence was presented. A handwriting expert was asked if one could change the photographic copy of writing by means of a knife blade or a pencil, and he answered, "Not without destroying or changing completely the original." When asked if there is any way by which the copy can be modified, he replied that one can so arrange the negative plate in making the photostatic copy that certain characteristics of the writing will be distorted without the

fact's being detected. It is even so in making reproductions of the life and character of Jesus. Once the picture is presented, whether good or bad, it cannot be changed. Everything depends upon care and accuracy in the secret laboratory of one's own heart, for "out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4: 23). Therein the plate, from which the reproduction is to be made, is prepared, and he who develops that negative and presents from it the picture is entirely responsible for what the reproduction will be. He alone can say whether he will make a true likeness of Christ or will present a caricature.

#### 4. *Tragedy of Misrepresentation*

It is a crime to misrepresent things to a blind man. Only the lowest and basest of people will take an unfair advantage of one who cannot see. But the lost people are blind! They cannot see and know things that pertain to their souls' welfare. They know Jesus only as he is represented to them by his followers. There is, therefore, a triple tragedy in failure to give them a correct idea of him and of his message for a lost world. There is tragedy *to him who misrepresents* Christ, for he is robbing himself of joy and gladness in service and of rewards hereafter. There is tragedy *to weak Christians* who are influenced by such misrepresentation, for they may be further estranged thereby. There is eternal tragedy *to the lost*, for, because of the carelessness or wilful negligence of the Christian, sinners may go into eternity without ever knowing the grace and beauty and glory of Christ. Surely every Christian who would hallow the name of God will give serious heed to his daily life that it may not misrepresent the Lord of life!

### III. ENHANCED BY LOYALTY

The loyalty of a servant to his master's interests never fails to cause the public to have a greater respect for that master. Every true steward of Christ will keep this fact in mind and will not allow the allurements of the

world and the desires of the flesh to cause him to indulge in practices which true loyalty should and will proscribe.

### 1. *Paul's Noble Example*

If there ever was a Christian who sought to reflect the likeness of Christ every day, it was Paul. Perhaps no other Christian ever lost so much of the world for the sake of being true to the Lord. Hear him declare, "I count all things but loss (repulsive refuse) that I may win Christ." All things for him included home, kinsmen, friends, position, wealth, public honor, the praise of men. Yet he was willing to give them up for his Lord! Little wonder then that he could declare, "For to me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1: 21)!

### 2. *Building a Reputation*

Nothing so reflects the nature of Jesus as the Christian who has made for himself a good reputation. Three questions should be asked by every one who plans to live with others: (1) *At what cost* shall I live my life, and whom shall I expect to pay it? If I expect the world to pay, then I shall grow into some kind of a criminal. Every man who is behind prison bars because of his own deeds expected society to pay the cost. Everyone who is a blessing to society is such because he expected himself to pay the cost through sacrifices and service. (2) *For what purpose* shall I live? If to satisfy my carnal nature, to glut my appetite, and satiate my other lusts, then society will have to suffer. If to prove a blessing to others, then I give up whatever is injurious to myself as well as that which hurts others, and make of my body a living sacrifice. (3) *To what extent* do I wish to live? If I consider only my span of years here on earth, I shall care little about spiritual values and be tempted to low living. If I consider spiritual things as I should, I will determine never to allow anything which I can possibly avoid to besmirch my reputation and thus harm the cause of him who died that I might live the abundant life.

### 3. *What Price Glory?*

The prodigal son stands etched upon the background of Christian history as a warning to everyone who is misled by his own base nature into seeking pleasure, fame, and glory through untried and questionable channels. No more graphic picture of the ruin of youth can be imagined. From an honorable place in his father's household he dropped to where even the swill in a pigsty would have made a banquet for his hungry body! And there are many Christian workers who take the terrible downward path which he followed. For the sake of a temporary good time, or a few nights of reveling, or in order to escape a little ridicule of a fast crowd, they gather together all their Christian treasures—good name, pleasant social life, delightful hours of worship in the house of God, wholesome spiritual food and fellowship—and go off to the far country of worldly living, mix there with ungodly companions, and in the end find themselves without friends and spiritual sustenance which alone make life worth while.

One afternoon the telephone rang in a pastor's study. When he took down the receiver and made himself known, an anxious voice bade him come to a certain number as soon as possible. He went immediately and upon entering the house was ushered into a room wherein lay the wreck of what had once been a beautiful, vivacious young woman. She was a victim of the dread white plague, and only a few hours were left for her to dwell in that frail body. He knew immediately why he had been called, so sought to relieve her soul of any dread that might hold it as the grim hand of death gripped her flesh. After a few leading questions, he learned that she had been lured away from church and Christian service by a worldly crowd, that a few months before she had contracted a cold at a downtown dance-hall, and that she had sincerely repented of her backsliding and knew God had forgiven. Finally, amidst racking coughs, she said, "I wanted you to come so I could tell you to warn young people for

me never to turn away from their Christian service to follow the world. I had a little fun; I was popular for a season; but since I have lain here, not one of the crowd who led me astray has ever darkened that door."

It is the old, old story. Tens of thousands of distressed souls have voiced it in one way or another. Temporary fame may be won in beauty contests, marathons, fashion shows, at places of worldly amusement, or of vice and crookedness, but what a ghastly price to pay for it! Just as the prodigal spent all and became hungry and heartsick, so will every child of God find the end of the road to worldly glory in the darkness of bitter disillusionment. The prodigal Christian may win earth's fame for a season, but at a terrible cost to himself and to others.

#### IV. ENJOYED BY THE FAITHFUL

The wonderful thing about the honor of Christ is that it is enjoyed by every follower who helps to create it. To be able to enhance that honor, to see tens of thousands of new people joining in singing his praises and enlarging the reach of his kingdom, is an ideal that should inspire every loyal heart. Four things will bring pride and joy to every servant of his household:

##### *1. The Expansion of His Realm*

What normal human being does not revel in the enlargement of his enterprise? There is keen delight in knowing that he can increase his usefulness, enlarge his holdings, stretch further the range of his experiences. Should not this natural reaction find its highest form in witnessing the enlargement of that which shall never cease? The conversion of every soul, the founding of every new church, the spread of our work in foreign lands, and every addition to Christ's army and its equipment should and will bring delight to the heart of every one who really loves his Lord.

##### *2. Enlarged Fellowship*

The growth in number of disciples and the increase in



the amount and effectiveness of their equipment insures a continuously enlarging fellowship among believers. They may meet temporary reverses, but our God has promised, "Of the increase of his government . . . there shall be no end" (Isa. 9: 7), and his word cannot be false. As the churches extend their borders, increase their membership, and learn to co-operate with other churches, so does the fellowship of believers expand, and with the coming of each new convert there is added a spiritual kinsman for all to enjoy.

### 3. *Catching Reflected Glory*

Every son of a noble father thrills with pride on being told, "You're very much like your father." Every daughter of a beautiful mother keenly appreciates it when she is told that she resembles her mother. The proudest moment in the life of a Christian should be when someone can honestly say that he is morally and spiritually like the Redeemer, that he possesses the characteristics of God. And this will be said of every one who really reflects the nature and who earnestly seeks to obey the will of God.

### 4. *The Regal Partnership*

One of the greatest tributes ever paid the followers of Christ was sent by Paul to the church at Corinth: "For we are labourers together with God" (1 Cor. 3: 9). Another like it was sent to the church at Rome: "We are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; . . . joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8: 16-17). Still another was paid the church at Ephesus: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household [*oikonomia*] of God" (Eph. 2: 19). One cannot be so crippled or deformed physically but that he may labor with God in perfecting the creation which has been marred by sin. If there is a family tie anywhere that should bring pride to every heart, it is that which comes to everyone who is born from above. One may not have a country; he may even not know of what blood he is; but if he is a redeemed



soul, he is a citizen of an everlasting kingdom and a partner of God. Surely in these wonderful relationships there is enough to lure any lost soul to seek Christ and to cause every disciple of his to want to prove himself worthy of such holy privileges!

It is said that on one occasion Alexander the Great was inspecting a portion of his army. While passing hurriedly along before one legion, he noticed a man who was uncouth in appearance and whose weapons were tarnished and rusted. "What is your name?" he asked, when he had stopped before him. "Alexander," was the abashed reply. "Then either clean up and be worthy such a name or else change it to another," commanded the king.

What would Jesus the Christ say to some of his followers, were he someday to call for a review of his forces and find many of them sullied by sin, their garments contaminated by contact with the world and soiled by indulgence in evil practices, their spiritual weapons dulled, rusty, and unfit for use in the battles against Satan? Surely, when his honor and his divine cause are at stake, he could say no less than "Either clean up or else take to yourself some other name than Christian!" He cannot expect less of his followers than that their influence will be used to answer the prayer which he gave them as a model.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Read the account of Judas in John 13; 18: 1-12; Matt. 27: 3-10.
2. Make a personal and private list of the errors which you as a "Bible" present to the world.
3. Read Chapter I of *Into All the World*, by A. J. Brown and John D. Freeman, and note the motives given for missionary activities. Do these apply to all Christian service?
4. Ask your banker or some leading merchant to explain to you how a credit bureau determines one's "credit rating."

5. Make a list of billboard advertisements that reveal the wiles of Satan in seeking to sell harmful things.
6. The reading of George Eliot's *Silas Marner* will prove profitable to anyone making a study of values.
7. Make a list of men whose loyalty has brought great honor to Uncle Sam.
8. Reread the story of the prodigal son and make a list of his most serious mistakes.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE ENTRUSTED TREASURE

## OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION: Parable of the Talents

### I. THE SACRED TRUST

1. The Body
  - (1) Its chief organ
  - (2) Its marvelous capacity
2. The Mind
3. The Personality

### II. THE SERVANT'S CAPACITY

1. Ability to Reason
2. Marvel of Memory
  - A wonderful storehouse
  - A dangerous storehouse
  - Need for great care
3. Ability to Choose
  - Choice
  - Free will
4. Methods of Expression
  - Words
  - Deeds
  - Specializing necessary

### III. SUBTLE DANGERS

1. Storing Up Bad Instead of Good
2. Failure to Cultivate Mind and Body:
  - (1) Laziness
  - (2) Irregularity

3. The Lure of the Flesh
4. Sapping the Foundations:
  - (1) Undermining health
  - (2) Destroying reputation
  - (3) Losing self-respect

#### IV. THE SERVANT'S OPPORTUNITY

1. A Rich Storehouse
2. A Sure Guide
3. A Master Workman

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ENTRUSTED TREASURE

#### Stewardship of Talent

Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee—2 Timothy 1: 6.

#### INTRODUCTION: Parable of the Talents

In giving to his disciples the parable of the talents, Jesus did not mean to limit its application to money alone. The servant who received ten talents is typical of men and women of large personal capacity, of strong minds, attractive bodies, and vigorous, aspiring souls. The servant who received five talents represents those who possess less ability. That every one has some capacity for service is indicated by the one-talent man, some talent which he is expected to develop for God's glory.

The good steward's obligation, then, is to cultivate, enlarge, utilize, and preserve the talents committed to his hands, and in the end he must account to the Lord for what they were to begin with and for the use that has been made of them. All too little thought has been given to this serious truth. The wise servants will bear in mind always four great facts about their talents and thereby more certainly guard against the sins of neglect and abuse.

#### I. THE SACRED TRUST

Whence came the natural powers of man's body, mind, and heart? Certainly not of his own handiwork, not of his own purchase, not from any effort he may ever have put forth. They came with him into the world, the gift of God through his parents. He can develop them, but he can never boast of having produced them. This sacred trust is a threefold one.

##### 1. *The Body*

Already we have seen something of the nature of the

human body. It is a very delicate and complicated machine upon which the soul is dependent for its ability to reveal to mankind the dreams and plans and ideals which it creates. Since it is the medium through which all our talents find expression, it is needful to remember at least two essential facts about it.

(1) *Its chief organ.*—The greatest miracle known to one who thinks is the mind of man, and the seat of this matchless power is in the organ called the brain. Herein is a *scientific laboratory* where, behind tightly-closed doors, secret processes go on that have never been understood. The more one seeks to disclose its mysteries, the more inaccessible it seems to become. It, like a great magician, performs its tricks, works its mystifying sleight-of-hand, and brings awe to all who watch, yet never discloses the secret method whereby it does such things.

Is this brain the whole of the show, or is there a "stage director" behind it? This is the question which philosophers have studied for ages, and about which modern psychologists are divided into warring camps. Every honest thinker must know that it is no more capable of doing all that it does without some directing power over it than that the hand can do all it does without the guidance of the brain. That there is some agent inside which controls the brain, even as one controls the hand, may be proved by anyone who will try. When you are in bed, center your thoughts upon the brain with the purpose of stopping it from work. At first, it will perhaps jump and skip about like a flea, evading every effort to corner it. But keep on trying, and at last you will become as conscious of its relaxing and settling down to rest as you ever were of tired limbs doing so. In the same way one can bridle his brain and compel it to concentrate on lessons to be learned, problems to be solved, and habits to be cultivated. It takes effort, but it is worth the time. This sacred treasure is subject to the control of the one who possesses it and was never intended to run wild.

(2) *Its marvelous capacity.*—A certain lad grew up in the country. From earliest childhood he loved music. Any sort of tone stirred something within him that gave him peculiar delight. At an early age he began to dream music, and the few instruments which he could get were mastered. At last it was made possible for him to go to a conservatory where he had access to a great pipe organ and a splendid teacher. After years of tireless study and practice he was a skilled organist. With the precision born of long, arduous work he could handle the instrument as a great engineer might handle a piece of machinery. Through the medium of the organ he could release the dream music of his soul and make it real for others to enjoy. Every part of the instrument was the slave of his own mind and hand, and in hours when he played for audiences of delighted listeners he found the reward for the long years of preparation. His soul created much of his music, but it was dependent upon the development of his body for giving expression to it.

Not everyone can be a great musician, or a great artist, or a great orator. God did not create all souls alike; he did not give to each the same talents. "Now there are diversities of gifts, . . ." (1 Cor. 12: 4). But there is as much glory in becoming a great mechanic who knows how to build an organ as there is in being able to play the organ. There is as much honor in being able to cut the timbers, place them right, and construct the house as there is in being able to plan the house. It requires the same kind of spiritual development to be a good builder as to be a good architect. The body, like a great organ of many parts, is the instrument by means of which one's talents are cultivated and used, and he who is wise will begin early to master that body with all its capacities and bring all its members under the absolute control of his will.

## 2. *The Mind*

One finds himself baffled when he seeks to give a description of the strange thing which we call the mind.

It cannot be separated from the will unless one classes each as an attribute of the soul. Our concern, however, is not with what the mind is but with its relation to the development of our talents.

Did you ever sit and dream daydreams, or build air castles, peopling them with the kind of folk you would love to be with and providing them with the buildings and equipment you would always love to have at hand? Did you ever sit pondering some serious problem or seeking to determine the cause of some interesting thing? Up in the brain cells was then going on the strange process known as "ratiocination"—reasoning, sorting, and classifying the information in hand and from it creating new things or answering problems that puzzle. In that process the mind was busy, or was manifesting its functions.

This talent is God's greatest boon to man; it is what makes him "in the image of God." Like God, this mind is *creative*. It dreams and plans; it devises methods whereby the things dreamed may be made real; it guides the body to the end that the methods may be used in the accomplishment of the tasks demanded; it finishes the tasks and then, if they are well done, stands off and "sees that it is good." The duty of everyone, especially of the Christian youth, is to exercise this talent in every possible way in order to strengthen it and to make it more productive in its creative capacity.

### 3. *The Personality*

This word has come into general use among us, yet few realize what it means. "That which constitutes a person; that which distinguishes and characterizes a person," says the dictionary. It may be either good or bad, attractive or repulsive. Man's nature makes it impossible for him to be a nonentity in the world, a negative thing of no influence. In the strictest sense of the word, man alone has personality; for he alone is a person, a rational being. The foundations for personality are given of God. It is the duty of everyone to develop



them so that they will bring rich returns to the Giver. Money cannot purchase personality, nor can it be sold to another. Everyone determines what his own may be. If the soul is surrendered to Christ and one brings into his daily life the reading of the Word, prayer, and worship; cultivates the Christian graces and engages in that which is good, wholesome, uplifting, and ennobling, his personality grows in attractiveness, its influence for good widens and becomes more powerful, and in the end he takes back to God a talent that has multiplied itself manifold.

## II. THE SERVANT'S CAPACITY

The capacity of everyone is determined by the extent to which he develops the talents committed to his hands. It is a far step from learning why two and two make four to knowing how to solve complicated problems in trigonometry or calculus. It is a far reach from knowing how to build a playhouse to planning and constructing a giant skyscraper or a Brooklyn Bridge. But in the child who learns the first lessons in arithmetic or builds the first playhouse there is the latent capacity for the more exacting tasks. Money cannot buy this capacity; it is a gift of God and depends upon four things:

### 1. *Ability to Reason*

One cannot expect to go very far in the effort to attain a worthy goal in life if he does not develop the power of reason. There is little sense in trying to discover how the mind works. Once men believed that the brain secretes thought just as the liver secretes bile. Thousands of books on psychology have been written, and most of them have been discarded. Instead of wasting precious hours seeking to understand the mystery, the wise steward will accept it as a fact that he is a creative soul in possession of a marvelous physical organism and do everything in his power to develop it. The foolish youth will shun mathematics, Latin, and other difficult subjects while in school and in so doing turn his

back upon the studies which, more than any others, develop the alert mind and its one most valuable function, the creative power whereby plans are made, problems solved, and methods devised by which dreams may become realities. An hour spent in deep, earnest study of some problem in mathematics will do more to develop the reasoning power of the mind than weeks spent in reading trashy fiction.

## 2. *Marvel of Memory*

What is memory? Again the wise men of the ages hold up their hands and answer, "We don't know!" The most *wonderful storehouse* of the world is the mind. What a multitude of things it can contain! Somehow we possess the ability to lay aside the information gained from our daily experiences and from the lessons which we have really learned. How marvelous it is to be able to do something today and fifty years later go back in memory's store, unlock the room where the experience has been kept, and live it all again! It is another of those priceless things which money cannot buy. In it one has the room for storing during early life those things that, to a large extent, will determine what he is and does during the mature years of his stay here on earth. There is no end to the storage capacity of a strong, vigorous, well-trained memory.

*It is a dangerous storehouse*, for it will accept and hold whatever is brought into it. In nearly every city one will find warehouses in which the sights and odors are pleasing to the senses, or he can find warehouses which contain sights and odors that are extremely repulsive. Likewise, in the memory one may store things that in after years will bring delight, or he may fill it with things that will be unprofitable and repulsive. Clean, Christlike companions, good ennobling environment, well-planned and directed study, reading of good books, high thinking—these bring into the storehouse the good and beautiful and helpful. Low, base companions, places of sin and sordidness, love of vulgar stories, depraved pictures and

shows, the reading of cheap, sensuous literature—these fill the storehouse with that which is degrading and baneful. It is the solemn obligation of the Christian steward to guard the doors of this wonderful storeroom against anything that does not help to build character and provide for the most effective service.

*Great care* should therefore be exercised at all times that the proper things may come to be a part of memory's store. It is so much easier to store away fiction than it is to keep fact; so much easier to throw stuff into the mind helter-skelter, a hodgepodge of useless material, than it is to get down to work at the real task of securing useful lore, sorting and classifying the information, and tucking it away in an orderly fashion for future use. The difference between success and failure is the difference between systematic, diligent study during the years of youth, and indolent, careless disregard of what goes into the mind.

### 3. *Ability to Choose*

Capacity depends also upon one's ability to make up his mind, to decide issues, to reach conclusions. *Choice* is the result of the exercise of one's free will. Always it is being made. Fortunate is the man or woman who has learned how to see all the factors connected with any issue and to step in at the right moment with clear mind and select that which is best. In a true sense one must ever stand alone when the moment of choosing comes. It is just then that his "image of God" stands supreme. He may have the advice of any whom he will; the Spirit of truth, if besought, will present his side of the issue; Satan is sure to present his. But in the end the issue must be settled by the individual, for he alone may decide whether to act and how.

*Free will* is a marvelous gift. It may be exercised or not. One can go through life depending upon the will of another. But if he ever fully develops the talents which God has given him, he must cultivate the ability to make his own choices, to decide what is best and right. Leader-

ship is little more than the power of knowing what to do and stepping forward ahead of someone else to begin it. But it is gained by creating the assurance that one knows what is best to do. A few mistakes will cause the masses to doubt and to cease to follow. Two major defeats will unseat any general in times of war, because they cause the soldiers to doubt the character of his decisions. Every good steward will begin early in life to discipline his own will and to learn how to foresee all the possibilities involved in his choices so as to be able to make the fewest mistakes. A rash, impulsive nature, therefore, must be restrained and a slow, phlegmatic one must be spurred.

#### 4. *Methods of Expression*

Capacity depends very much upon one's methods of expression. The most thoroughly developed brain, the most marvelous reason, and even a well-trained will are helpless without the means of exercising themselves. Two avenues should always be open. *Words*, which are the pictures of ideas we have in mind, come first. Therefore, one should be master of words. Our language is so rich in these symbols that there is no excuse for one's not being able to say what he wants to say. *Deeds* constitute a second medium of expression. The body is capable of such development that there is no excuse for not being able to execute plans, to bring into being the things that are created in the mind and thus utilize one's talents for the good of all.

But one cannot know all the words in our language, nor can he ever hope to perform all the deeds known to mankind. *He must specialize.* In other words, he must discover what his forte, his chief talent, is and bend his efforts toward the development of mind and body so as to give it the greatest possible freedom. The noted orator, the renowned scholar, the famed musician or artist, the honored merchant, the trusted banker, the successful farmer, the beloved physician or nurse, the revered minister—these and all other successful men and women have reached their positions because they early discovered

some particular bent of their nature and set forth to develop it. The mastery of words placed at their disposal the storehouse of information found in books. The ability to do things made possible their usefulness to society. Every good steward of God must discover early in life the things he is especially qualified to do and master the methods whereby they may be accomplished.

### III. SUBTLE DANGERS

Four subtle dangers confront every youth, and they are present all through life. "To be forewarned is to be forearmed," is an adage worth remembering. If one knows what the dangers are, he may prepare himself to avoid them and the tragedies which they will bring.

#### 1. *Storing Up Bad Instead of Good*

Between Ridgecrest and Old Fort, North Carolina, there is a splendid spring whose waters come down the side of the bluff which overhangs the highway. One day I was driving along there with some friends. It was hot and sultry, and we were thirsty. We saw the clear water running from the rocks and thought to slake our thirst. But upon drawing nearer, we discovered a sign, "Water Polluted; do not drink!" Something was wrong with the source of the water. We dared not drink in the face of the warning.

One's mind is the well out of which flow the streams of waters which will either refresh and bless others or else will pollute them. If that source is filled with things drawn from immoral, sensuous, and otherwise corrupt sources, it will contaminate all who touch it, and all who drink therefrom will be polluted. It is highly essential, therefore, that the Christian steward should always exercise great care in reading and in the things he sees, to the end that his mind may not be filled with that which is low and base and evil. He should exercise no less care in the choice of companions, for "one cannot associate with dogs without getting fleas on him." "Evil

companions corrupt good manners" is so evidently true that one should not have to be reminded of it.

### *2. Failure to Cultivate Mind and Body*

Another ever-present danger is that of failing to cultivate the two mediums through which the God-given talents are developed. This is usually due to two very subtle habits. (1) *Laziness* is one of the worst enemies of mankind. Somehow it is so difficult to make these bodies of ours be alert, to bring them to where they enjoy labor, whether mental or physical, to come to the place where we can find them willing servants, ready at all times to move at the bidding of our wills. (2) *Irregularity* is another enemy of our lives. Habits are formed either thoughtlessly or by carefully executed plans. If one gives way to laziness, he is sure to be irregular, to be without proper habits of living and working. A carefully trained mind will be governed by fixed habits which require little strain upon it, and these in turn will bring regularity into our daily lives which will prevent waste of time and energy. One's talent can never be utilized to its maximum capacity until these enemies have been completely routed.

### *3. The Lure of the Flesh*

The most constant danger one has to guard against is the natural desires of the flesh. All kinds of destructive agencies come to us if we yield here. Broken health results from yielding to the appetite. Deranged bodily functions grow out of carelessness about the cleanliness, regularity, and exercise of the body and its need for plenty of rest during the hours of darkness. The highest functions of the body may be perverted to low uses and thus become a curse whose end is death. The prodigal son turns up again and again as a warning to all who begin to listen to the desires of the flesh. To yield is to bring ruin and perhaps disgrace. To resist and conquer bring success and honor.

### *4. Sapping the Foundations*

From the trains one can see, when crossing some rivers,

tiers of piling driven into the banks of the streams and fastened together into mighty bulwarks that hold the currents from undermining the abutments and destroying the foundations of the great steel spans. Every large building is so arranged that the foundations may not be injured or weakened. How important it is that we should have a good solid foundation beneath our lives, the structures we erect here in the world, and into which we pour the things that will last for eternity! There is always danger that the foundations may be sapped so that the building will be incomplete or fall into utter ruin.

We sap the foundations: (1) by *undermining health*. Upon a strong, vigorous body we are utterly dependent for success in life. If it is weak, our talents, however strong, must surely remain hidden, or else only partially be used. Money cannot buy health once it has been seriously impaired. Men have offered scientists unlimited sums of money for the privilege of having their bodies repaired and made strong again. (2) *Destroying reputation* is another sure way of sapping the foundations. A certain man made one slip in his youth. He dropped from a splendid position with a great financial institution down to the rank of a job hunter and has never been able to come very far back. He destroyed the reputation upon which his career was so dependent. (3) *Losing self-respect* will undermine the foundation, for if there is not an abiding conviction of one's worth and a definite belief that he is an honorable and indispensable part of society, he will have no secure ground beneath him as he starts life's program. Every good steward will guard with patient care the foundations upon which he must build to the end that his talents may be utilized to their utmost limits.

#### IV. THE SERVANT'S OPPORTUNITY

"What may I do with my life?" The question is a sensible one for every youth to ask. It is very important that it be asked and the answer be seriously sought. The



talents committed to each one by the Creator furnish the means of making life count mightily either for good or for bad, for the honor of God, or for the advancement of Satan's reign. His opportunity lies in providing a full storehouse and in choosing an infallible guide.

### 1. *A Rich Storehouse*

No one can have a rich, full, spiritual storehouse except the child of God. To possess it he must build himself up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6: 4). He will store away the riches of God's Word, memorizing the choice selections, learning to know the Book so as to be able to use it any time, anywhere. He will accept the commands of the Lord as binding upon him and seek to shape his habits of living in keeping with them. He will fill his mind with thoughts of the beautiful, the good, the noble, the worth while. He will carefully select from his daily experiences those things that have been profitable as well as pleasant and will tuck these away to govern him in the days to come.

He will seek to remove from memory those things which are ugly and out of harmony with the divine will, that give displeasure to the Holy Spirit who dwells in him. His memory will grow fuller each day of the things that bring delight to the finest senses and which will be ready all the time to be drawn upon for the furtherance of the plans which he makes in order to be a more effective servant of the Lord.

### 2. *A Sure Guide*

The rich spiritual storehouse would be of little value were it not for the fact that God gives to each of his servants a Guide who never fails to direct aright, not only in the choice of life's plan, but also in the methods by which it is realized. The divine impact upon the heart and life made by the Holy Spirit is as surely a fact as anything with which the Christian can be familiar. "The still, small voice" speaks to the soul, arranges the program for the yielded life, warns of dangers, convicts of sin, soothes and comforts, and brings illumination and



inspiration. It is through the medium of prayer that the heart and soul are kept in contact with the Spirit and thus are yielded to his will.

While I write these lines the radio on my table is going. It never ceases to be a mystery to me. Strange contraption of wires, lights, coils, condensers, and other interesting gadgets, it is the answer to every infidel who has ridiculed prayer and the ability of the human mind to project its desires outward to where they reach the ear of God. I turn the dial and in comes New York; I switch it a bit more and perhaps get Denver. Were it newer and more complete, I could switch to a short-wave dial and pick up London, Rome, Rio de Janeiro! What is the secret of it? Perfect accord between the instrument and the broadcasting station! My soul is a delicate receiving set, and if I have it properly attuned through Bible reading, meditation, and prayer, I can have brought to me through the agency of the Holy Spirit the messages of God, and following them I cannot fail in my service for him.

### 3. *A Master Workman*

Since we are fellow laborers with God, the Christian should seek diligently to be a skilled workman. Paul's admonition to Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God" (2 Tim. 2: 15), should be his watchword every day. This demands *preparation for service* which, as already shown, includes the rigid discipline of the mind as well as of the body, and the correct training and exercise of each. All our talents are bound up in them. Without them no one can express himself, can make known the real person he or she is. There should also be the impulse of a *worthy motive*. It is just here that the Christian has the surest guarantee of success, for there can be no higher or more worthy motive than that of love, and love is the motivating power in every Christian's life. He who has found his primary talent, developed his mind and body to make it productive, and is driven onward by the holy desire to do worthy things

for others because he loves them, cannot fail to bring back to the Giver of the trust talents that have been multiplied manifold. Of such it must be said at the judgment, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Mankind stands after all these centuries a mighty pile of undeveloped yet potential beauty and glory and power. In all the history of the race there has been but one who realized what was in it, what might be made out of it, and that was the Divine Sculptor, Jesus Christ. He saw not a fisherman but Petros, the rocklike man, awaiting the touch of the Master's hand in order to have the strength and beauty of his character revealed. Jesus saw the Samaritan woman, not as a lewd, depraved virago, but as a flame-tongued evangel, spreading everywhere she went the story of the advent of the Messiah. He knows what powers we possess, hence woos every disciple to yield himself unreservedly to the will of his Spirit, to the end that what the divine eye sees in him may be brought forth for the benefit of the world and the glory of the Eternal Artist.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Read Chapter II in *Some Learning Processes*, by L. P. Leavell and John L. Hill, for facts about the brain and its working.
2. Read Chapter V in this same book for primary facts about memory.
3. Examine your own memory to see just what it contains that is good and what bad.
4. Why does our modern, complicated life make it all the more necessary for young people to specialize?
5. What dangers lie in confining one's studies to one branch of learning?
6. In what ways may the Christian most effectively prepare himself for the best service for the world?
7. Read "The Great Stone Face," by Nathaniel Hawthorne. No story can more certainly show the value of setting a worthy goal and of paying the price of achieving success.
8. *The Courage That Propels*, by G. Ray Jordan, will meet a need in the lives of those who are seeking to be true to the highest ideals.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **GUARDING AN ESTATE**

#### **OUTLINE**

##### **INTRODUCTION: A Twofold Stewardship**

##### **I. THE ESTATE**

1. Origin of the Estate:  
The sufficient cause  
Man's part
2. Content of the Estate:  
(1) Raw materials  
(2) The heritage  
(3) Undiscovered resources
3. Purpose of the Estate:  
(1) For God's glory  
(2) The testing ground  
(3) The ultimate end

##### **II. THE TRUSTEESHIP**

1. Originates with God
2. Granted According to Capacity
3. Committed for Owner's Glory
4. A Trust, Not a Possession

##### **III. THE OBLIGATION**

1. Preserve from Decay
2. Promote and Enlarge
3. Protect and Defend
4. Use for Owner's Good

##### **IV. THE ACCOUNTING**

1. Details Minute
2. The Law Rigid
3. The Examination Complete
4. Faithfulness Rewarded

CHAPTER V  
GUARDING AN ESTATE  
Stewardship of Possessions

Have dominion—Genesis 1: 28.

INTRODUCTION: A Twofold Stewardship

Thus far in these studies we have been dealing with those treasures which God has given to each normal human being as his very own. Life, personal influence, and special talents are gifts from God. While they are held in trust, they are unlike the other possessions, because they belong exclusively to the holder and are taken with him when he leaves the earth. Every man must account to God for their use, for whether or not they have glorified the Lord who gave them. We now come to where the study must be turned to things which never belong to man, but which are merely entrusted to him for a season in order that his life may be made richer and more powerful in the advancement of the common welfare of all mankind. These are generally known as temporal possessions, physical goods, riches, etc. The Word of God is very definite and clear in its teachings about such things, and every wise *oikonomos* of Christ will want to know what it says.

I. THE ESTATE

When God had created the earth and had placed upon it the parent creatures of all that he deemed good and useful, he made man and set him in the midst of a garden with the distinct command that he have dominion over what had been made. From the very first it was made clear that man is not the owner but only the keeper. The world and the fulness thereof are God's (Psalm 24: 1). Man is the servant whom the Creator placed in charge of all these riches. Whenever he comes to think of them

as his own, he is always subject to the temptations which are at the foundation of all our social, political, economic, and moral ills. A glance at the origin, content, and purpose of the estate will aid one in forming the right attitude toward it and its use.

### 1. *Origin of the Estate*

Whence came the earth and its myriads of beautiful, strange, diverse creatures? One's answer to the question will determine his attitude toward life itself. For ages scientists and philosophers have sought another answer than that given in one brief, commanding sentence in the Bible, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1: 1). No other statement has ever been so reasonable and satisfying.

Behind everything which we know or experience there is *a cause*. Always we ask the question Why? No sane human being can be satisfied with any evasion; he must discover a satisfactory cause for everything which he knows. I see a broken window, and immediately my mind seeks an explanation for the damage. I see a split, scarred, broken tree, and I know it could not have become such without some external power's having been exerted upon it—perhaps a storm or a bolt of lightning, or a load of ice upon its branches. I see a bruised spot on my friend's face, and instinctively I desire to ask, "What has happened to you?" I want to know the cause for everything.

When I begin my investigations, I find facts which lead me to the conclusion that only one of two or three things could account for what I see. I decide that it is the most likely explanation, and then begins what is known as "apriori reasoning." In other words, I assume that this cause is sufficient to bring about the effect witnessed and proceed to examine all the facts involved to see if they are in harmony with my assumption. If there are major facts which do not fit into the scheme, I must know that I am wrong. If, however, I find that the imaginary cause does explain absolutely what I see,

I can be sure that it is at least one possible cause. And when I find that it is the only possible cause which will explain what I see, I know that it is the thing for which I seek.

Let us apply this method of reasoning to the origin of the world and of ourselves. Can any natural cause be found that explains them? Nay, for always I am confronted by the question, What made it, and how could it have produced what it did? If I suppose that the earth came by chance, I am confronted by the natural laws which make it possible. Without what we call gravity and the ironclad laws governing this mystic force I cannot account for the universe or the earth. Without the laws governing the chemical world I cannot account for heat and the mystic power it has over all living things. Without the laws governing light, growth, etc., everything around me becomes a miracle. Without the law of heredity all species of living things are inexplicable.

Whence came these laws? Could there have been an orderly universe before the law of gravitation existed? Did living creatures create the law of heredity, or did it exist before there was life on the earth? Did chance events produce the laws governing chemical reactions and physical phenomena, or do we not have to admit that they are the products of creative mind? Is my own creative soul the outgrowth of generations of experiences? If so, why did not other creatures come to possess such a spirit? Could any piece of inanimate material, a rock or a pile of sand for example, by any stretch of the imagination be considered a sufficient explanation for life, for the orderly systems of living things, for the natural laws which govern our planetary systems and everything on our earth, and for myself?

Always to such questions comes the answer from every honest mind, no. Upon a purely natural basis there is no explanation. I must go beyond all these things for my cause. And when I honestly do this, I am compelled to admit that the only Cause, which really ex-



plains all and against which there is not one disturbing factor in my investigations, is the Eternal Mind, the Infinite Creator, who is revealed in the Bible as the Lord of creation and the Preserver of all things. Once I have accepted the God of the Bible as the background of what I see and know, I have a logical explanation of every step from the beginning until now. To go behind the ultimate, absolute cause of anything is impossible; hence, when we have accepted God as the beginning, we have reached the Ultimate Absolute in our process of reasoning. We need not seek an answer to the question Why is God? for there is none except in God himself.

*Man's part* in the estate is to develop it, to discover, and release forces latent in the world about him. I see the gorgeous American Beauty rose, standing in stately splendor in the garden or hothouse. There is a reason for its beauty and glory, and man is part of that reason. He discovered the latent powers and beauties in the ragged wild rose, cultivated them, and released them. I see the full, rich harvest of Indian corn, covering vast acres of land with its great stalks and its drooping ears of ripe grain. I seek the cause, and I discover the hand of man releasing and developing the potential richness in the straggling stalks of maize which the Indian had developed from the native weeds of our continent. I see the stalwart, giant Percheron horse, the great Poland China hog, the marvelous Jersey milk cow, and back behind them I see the stunted, worthless wild creatures which possessed the latent characteristics that have been released by the creative mind of man. It is into the laboratory of nature that God invites those who have been made in his image, bidding them come in and work with him to complete what he began.

## 2. *Content of the Estate*

What is there in this vast rich estate which God has placed at the disposal of man, and which he expects man to improve and develop? (1) First of all, there are the *raw materials*: air, water, soil, minerals, gases, the mul-

titudinous forms of chemicals. There are the living things of infinite variety; there are the physical forces that govern the universe and that have so much to do with the development of the raw materials. Man has, after millenniums of effort, learned many of their secrets, utilized many of their powers, enjoyed hosts of their riches; but all about him lie vast stores of undeveloped, unutilized raw products awaiting the touch that will transform them into useful adjuncts to his fullest, richest experiences here on earth.

(2) There is also his *heritage from his ancestry*. Only Adam, of all men, could boast of what "I have done." Every true Christian will readily admit that he owes much to his ancestors, that their plans and labors gave him most of what he today enjoys or may enjoy. Every generation is far richer than that which preceded it. Every century brings its treasures out of the vast natural storehouse for people of the next century to enjoy.

(3) Again, there is the vast store of *undiscovered resources* which belong to this estate. Man can never claim to have done all God expects him to do. Whatever is seen in nature may be produced on a more lavish scale by man's added efforts. Whatever Jesus began to do while here on earth, man may do on a larger scale, if only he will be subject to the will of Christ. "Greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father," he declared (John 14: 12), and already the prophecy is being fulfilled. Out of the secret storehouse have come during recent years radio, radium, chemical marvels, television, and hosts of other things. Are other secrets yet to be discovered? Ask any great chemist, any electrical engineer, any mechanical engineer, any botanist, physicist, surgeon! We have merely tapped the mines of natural wealth. God's stewards will never be content to cease their investigations, their delving into this store, for it is his divine will that every store be unlocked and every treasure be brought to light and utilized for the welfare of man. He created them all and stored them up

in order that they might furnish the souls of men with incentives for continuous development and with a medium through which they could climb constantly upward in their battles against sin and its blasting effects upon all that God at first pronounced good.

### 3. *Purpose of the Estate*

God had a threefold purpose in creating the natural world over which he put man as the overseer. (1) He did it for *his own glory* and as a proof of his eternal wisdom and power. No whim of a pagan philosopher can account for the orderly universe in which man lives and moves and has his being. No fancy of a narrow mind can explain it. In and through it all, yet over and in command of it all, one sees the Eternal Mind, and until his soul is deadened by sin, he instinctively wants to worship. (2) It is *the testing ground* for the creature who was made in the image of God. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5: 21) is the injunction of the apostle Paul. It implies the ability of man both to discover what is good and to fix it for future use. Man stands in the midst of a vast realm of creatures and things, and wherever he turns they make their appeals to him. In making his choices he finds the supreme test, the same test which appeared in the dawn of the human family and found Adam and Eve too weak to stand against the arch deceiver.

(3) What is the *ultimate end* of creation, the goal for which the estate was intended? One asks the question and stands in awe, for whither shall he go to seek the answer? Skeptical science tells him that there is no goal, that in the end the earth will have disintegrated, or other planets will have done so, until the existing order in our solar system will have been disrupted, and then will come a fiery cataclysmic end. But the follower of Jesus Christ gazes by faith into the future and there sees a glorious transformation, when the kingdoms of this earth will have become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, a day when pristine beauty and glory

and perfection will have taken the place of the corruption and vice and waste and degeneracy against which he struggles for a season here on earth. He knows that God's purpose in creation was and is the ultimate realization of the hopes and longings of the souls of those who have dared to accept his Word as truth and to follow on in the footsteps of the Lord who came that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

## II. THE TRUSTEESHIP

Since the earth and the fulness thereof are God's, originating with him and kept for his own glory, it remains for man to discover the nature of his obligations to God by learning the primary facts about his trusteeship. Four major facts confront us:

### 1. *Originates with God*

There can be no trusteeship until there is one to convey it. A leasehold is predicated upon the existence of an owner. Adam was the first leaseholder of the estate of God. His rights and interests and obligations are still in effect for all the race. God committed the garden to his care; he was only a gardener, not an owner in fee simple. Likewise, all men are leaseholders, caretakers, of the natural resources about them. With the fall of man, the tenure of the estate was limited in time as well as in scope. Hence, all men are temporarily in charge of the estate, and to each is allowed only a meager portion of it. The trusteeship originates with God and is limited by his divine fiat.

### 2. *Granted According to Capacity*

One's ability to appreciate and enjoy the estate of nature depends upon his own self-development. Man is limited not by the Owner but by himself. An auditorium may be packed with a vast audience who have gathered to hear some noted musician. Each member of that audience will enjoy the recital according to his ability. Neither the management nor anyone else can restrict

one who has paid the price of admittance. Even so, trusteeship of the estate of nature is granted by God to all alike, but their ability to exercise it is determined by each alone. Man's faulty social and political systems may limit one's sphere of activity or his chances for self-culture, but they cannot rob him of his entire heritage.

While capacity determines one's enjoyment of the estate, it also governs one's responsibility. The parable of the talents presents the eternal truth that God knows the capacity of each servant of his and expects no more of anyone than he can do. At the same time it reveals the inexorable justice of God in demanding of each servant all that he is capable of doing. No man is exempted. "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14: 12); in other words, God will overlook none in the day of judgment.

### *3. Committed for Owner's Glory*

The sole purpose God had in mind in creating the universe was his own glory. However poorly we may understand this fact, it is a true one nevertheless. He therefore expects it to be developed and made fruitful. The parables of Jesus emphasize this. That of the vineyard (Matt. 21: 33-41), of the talents (Matt. 25: 14-30), of the unfaithful servant (Matt. 24: 48-51), and others show that God does not allow his people any latitude; he expects them to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth (Gen. 1: 28).

### *4. A Trust, Not a Possession*

The estate which God has committed to mankind is to be held in trust. If there were no word in the Bible about the matter, one could still know that this is so. What can man take from the earth with him? Not even the body in which he lives! What can he come back to possess in the judgment? Naught, for all temporal things will be destroyed by fire (2 Peter 3: 10)! Threescore years and ten is his allotted time on earth, and though he live five or ten years beyond that limit, all he can

do is to see the possessions slowly but surely passing from his hands to others. There is sacred relief in knowing that he shall not have to go on forever worrying about these temporal things and in knowing that his responsibility for them will soon be transferred to others. The happy man is he who has developed them before passing them on and has helped to provide more worthy trustees into whose hands to commit them.

### III. THE OBLIGATION

Trusteeship involves moral obligation as well as legal responsibility. We know this from our own experiences and from man's legal codes. To administer any estate under the laws of our land requires four fixed objectives, none of which a true trustee will seek to evade; and each of these is based upon the truth which God has revealed to man in his Word.

#### 1. *Preserve from Decay*

When I seek to make bond as administrator of an estate, one of the things which is determined by the court is my ability to preserve that which is committed to my hands. My reputation as an administrator is gone carefully into by every honest judge before my bond is allowed. One who does not preserve his own property cannot be expected to perform the duties of trusteeship in a satisfactory way. One who allows thieves and cheats to rob him of his own holdings can never be expected to safeguard the property of another. One who misuses his own goods will not safeguard those of another. In committing his estate to the hands of men, God made it very definite that they should be held accountable for preserving it. Gullied hillsides, half-starved mules and dilapidated buildings and fences mark the farm of an unworthy steward. Instead of such there should be an annual improvement in them all. Five hundred years hence people should be drawing their sustenance from his lands and enjoying the comforts of buildings which he planned and began to erect. In the same way should

every possession be improved by each passing generation. No greater crime against posterity can be committed than the wanton destruction of our natural resources.

### *2. Promote and Enlarge*

Not only must the steward preserve the estate from waste and harm; he is also under sacred obligation to enlarge it and make it more valuable. Usually the law allows a legal administrator a certain per cent of the accrued profits from the estate which he handles, but he must never waste the estate itself. Likewise, God allows each one of us a portion of the increase, but to waste the original holdings is sin. If, then, we enlarge the holdings and increase their productiveness, we are permitted to enjoy more and more while here on earth. Whoever has been a good steward during the minority of an heir will almost surely be placed in charge of the estate under the direct supervision of the heir. This great fundamental fact of experience is portrayed by Jesus in the parable of the talents, for they who developed their holdings were placed in charge of larger responsibilities and were permitted to enjoy far more than the small portion at first committed to their hands. Happy is the Christian steward who studies, plans, and labors to the end that his physical holdings may always become more productive of good!

### *3. Protect and Defend*

The unfortunate man who slept peacefully on while the thief came and broke into his house is the example of the steward who is not alert and on the job doing what God expects of him. Satan comes any time and in all kinds of disguises to rob one of his holdings. The dissipation of one's bodily strength, the failure to develop one's talents, indulgence in sinful practices, waste of time and energy in worldly amusements, weakening of the mind through wicked habits and through the indulgence of the lusts of the flesh—these and other evils are always present, and unless guarded against will slowly but



surely weaken one's powers of administration to the extent that he will meet the Owner empty handed. Everything which constitutes one's estate in life, whether his own individual gifts or the things committed temporarily to his hands, can be protected from the despoiler and defended against the ravages of corruption and decay. The good steward will not fail to put forth every possible effort to that end.

#### *4. Use for Owner's Good*

The ultimate aim of every trusteeship is that the heir may enjoy the fruits of his inheritance. All men recognize this fact, and scores of laws have been passed to guarantee that the owner will not be denied that which is his. If man so recognizes the responsibility of trusteeship, how much more does God hold us accountable for observing it! Every talent I possess, every bit of temporal property, all of life and its rich deposit here on earth, are committed to my hands for the glory of God. Woe is me, therefore, if I fail to recognize obligations involved in my stewardship and thereby prove traitor to God who is the absolute Owner, and to his Son who is the heir and to whom accounting must be made.

### IV. THE ACCOUNTING

Stewardship does not end with preserving, enlarging, protecting, and using an estate. There comes an inevitable day when everyone must make an accounting of his trusteeship. Inexorably, inevitably, the day comes on apace, and if he is wise he will never forget it, but will govern his affairs to the end that he may not be afraid or ashamed in that day. This accounting will be determined not according to man's finite and imperfect standards, but according to the eternal laws and standards of God.

#### *1. Details Minute*

In rendering an account of his stewardship unto God, everyone shall have to reveal the minute details of every day and of every transaction. We are told that we shall



give an account for every idle word (Matt. 12: 36). Every deed done in the flesh must be reckoned with (Rom. 2: 6). Not one of our talents may be disposed of without our answering to the Giver, even as the servants answered to their master in the parable of the talents. There will be no escape for the negligent, the careless, the indifferent stewards. Not even a sparrow falleth without the knowledge of the Creator, and he who observeth such trivial things in life will surely not overlook the more vital matters, especially those connected with man's soul and the finer things with which God has endowed it.

### *2. The Law Rigid*

In observing the natural laws and their application everywhere about us, we have a vivid reminder of the strict justice of God in the enforcement of all law. If the law of gravitation allows nothing to escape its pull, but inflicts its penalty upon everything alike, how shall we hope to escape if we fail to keep the more serious spiritual laws? If the finite mind of man has devised laws for the protection of the estates of minor heirs at the hands of trustees, and these laws carry heavy penalties for failure to be obedient, how much more certainly will the laws of God protecting the estate of his own Son be enforced and their terrible penalties be inflicted upon all disobedient men!

### *3. The Examination Complete*

There is an interesting passage in the book of Revelation wherein we are told of "The Book of Life" and "the books" (Rev. 20: 11-13). In the former are written the names of all who have been born of God. In the latter are entered the records of the deeds of all men, and we are told that out of these books all shall be judged. We need not worry about what the books are, nor about how they can retain the records of the ages. Modern discoveries and inventions have done much to remove the doubts that once beset the minds of people regarding such things. On a wax disc or cylinder may be placed the

records of an office. Criminals have come to dread the records made by the dictaphone and the electrical transcribing machinery of the radio world. More marvelous still is the memory of man.

We cannot doubt these things, for they are too well known. Why, then, should we doubt that the Creator has placed in his universe miraculous recording devices which can take down all that occurs? We are told by scientists that if it were possible to make a journey outward from our planet at a speed faster than light, and if we could by some mechanical device pick up the light waves which have left this earth, we could retrace with the natural eye the events which have been taking place on portions of this earth since the dawn of creation. The mind of God spans all universes; his eye takes in the sweep of all ages; his ear hears the sounds of every generation. None can escape (Psalm 139).

#### *4. Faithfulness Rewarded*

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2: 10) has reference to the reward which the Son is storing up for his disciples. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25: 40) was spoken for those who strive to imitate the life of their Lord. "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward" (Matt. 10: 41) was promised that we may know the value of individual service, not for personal gain but out of love for the cause of the Redeemer.

"There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, . . . but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, . . . and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10: 29-30) was spoken by one who knew what relation exists between loyalty to the highest and holiest ideals of duty and service and the best things to be gained in life. The rewards for faithfulness are not confined to the future life. It is a well-known fact that the

largest per cent of great men and women in our country are the children of devout Christians. As boys and girls, they were taught to respect the things of the world and the rights of other people because they are divine in their origin. They were taught the meaning of life, the duty of service, the sanctity of holy things and places. Their thoughts were turned from things temporal to things eternal. They early learned what true values are, and so entered the arena of public life with holier impulses, loftier ambitions and surer, more definite goals in mind.

When Daniel Webster was beginning his law practice, he accepted an insurance case at a fee of twenty dollars. During his preparation for the trial he found that he must make a journey to Boston in order to secure certain information from a law library. But the trip would cost him almost the exact amount of the fee, and at first he hesitated about going. In the end, however, his sense of duty overcame his love of money and he went, gathered the data and won the case. Several years later he was passing through New York City one day. A noted case was to be tried in one of the courts, the chief counsel had suddenly become very ill, and Webster was asked to take the place upon his own terms. At first he refused because of the lack of time for preparation, but finally yielded. When the information about the case was laid before him, he was delighted to find that it was almost an exact duplicate of the former case. Within a little time he prepared a brief which was a masterpiece, won the case for his clients, and gained national fame as an attorney.

Because he had been faithful in the little thing, counting his duty of far more worth than any money he might earn, he was prepared to handle the big thing. And so will every steward of God prepare himself for great achievements and high honors, if only he is faithful to every trust committed to his hands by the Lord of glory.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. It will be a good tonic for any soul who will read *Lord, I Believe*, by R. G. Lee.
2. Let the class try to name something that is sufficient to explain itself without one's having to go beyond it for a previous cause.
3. Prepare a list of things which show sinful neglect on the part of man in caring for the natural estate which he holds.
4. Give at least five reasons that should make all men know they do not actually possess temporal things.
5. If you have an attorney to whom you can go, ask him to give you in brief the laws of your state governing trusteeships.
6. Make a list of Scripture passages which tell of the rewards to be given faithful servants of God; and another list showing how unfaithfulness will be punished.
7. Read anew the story of Daniel as illustrating the reward of faithfulness to a sacred trust (Dan. 1).

## CHAPTER VI

# THE WORLD'S VALUE METER

## OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION: Money a Trust

### I. DEVELOPING A STANDARD

1. Barter Economy
2. Turning to Money
3. Value's Measuring Rod

### II. THE STRENGTH OF GOLD

1. It Provides Power
2. It Produces Problems:  
    Making it honestly  
    Conserving it  
    Using it discreetly
3. Character's Acid Test

### III. THE CURSE OF MONEY

1. A Pagan Idol
2. Lust's Tool
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### IV. SACRED COIN

1. Paying Honest Debts
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## CHAPTER VI

### THE WORLD'S VALUE METER

As God hath prospered him—1 Corinthians 16:2.

#### INTRODUCTION: Money a Trust

Money is the value meter of the human race, for most civilized men have come to measure all values by it and to consider worthless whatever cannot be turned into dollars and cents, into francs and centimes, into marks and pfennigs, into pounds and shillings. Our trusteeship from God, then, cannot rightly be understood until after we have included a careful study of money and our responsibility for the proper use of it. Society sets the value of money and protects our individual rights in it. Society is the product of the plans of God for men, hence money which society furnishes is indirectly a trust transferred by the Creator to one's hands, and for which he must give account.

#### I. DEVELOPING A STANDARD

There is an interesting story connected with the transition which has taken place among men in the methods of exchanging their goods one with another. At first the mediums of exchange were few and crude. But as the race grew in numbers and the products from the hands of men increased in form, attractiveness, and usefulness, it became necessary to provide something that could be used anywhere traders might go, and coined money resulted.

##### 1. *Barter Economy*

No people have ever been found who did not possess some form of wealth. Even the most primitive savage has possessions which he calls his own and which others

respect as his. And wherever there is wealth—that which requires labor to produce and which may be appropriated and bartered—there is exchange. As long as men had few needs, knew few things to desire, and most of these were produced by their own hands or by their slaves, barter economy prevailed. If one savage saw something he desired, he simply found something to exchange for it, something which the other savage wanted enough to surrender his possession in order to have.

But there came a time when the desires increased and when one tribe became proficient in the making of some particular article while another became proficient in making another. Exchange continued until the point was reached where one or the other tribe's needs were satisfied. But when a third tribe and a fourth appeared with their specialties, a new impetus was given, for number one could trade with number two, supplying them with more than was needed; and in turn number two could trade the surplus to number three for things which neither they nor number one produced. Continued increase in demands brought further complications, and in the end certain articles were adopted as mediums of exchange, and the value of things began to be reckoned by them.

Thus skins of animals, certain shells and bright and unusual objects and ornaments became the money of the savages. The early Romans, as well as the ancient Jews and many other people, made cattle their medium of exchange, the "legal tender" of their day. The name of the monetary unit of Mexico, *peso*, is derived from the Latin word *pecus* (cow), which is in turn the root of the Latin *pecunia* (money). Salt has been a favored medium of exchange among primitive people. Rice, fruits, ivory, and all precious stones and metals have been so used.

## 2. Turning to Money

Slowly but surely men turned to the metals for their standards of values. The Spartans used iron, but soon found that it was too heavy to be serviceable. Copper

and brass have often been used. Gold and silver early came to be the money metals of civilized men. At first they were unminted. We find references in the Old Testament to the weights of money. The *shekel* was not a coin but a weight of money. The *mark* of Germany gets its name from the Anglo-Saxon weight of the same name. England holds to the *pound* as her standard. The old French *livre* and the modern Italian *lira* were originally weights and not coins. The oldest coins known today were minted by the Lydians of Asia Minor during the seventh century before Christ, but long afterwards values were determined by the weight of coins rather than by the number.

People early learned that money cannot be stable and safe legal tender unless the government has control of minting. Stable money is put forth whenever the government forbids all private individuals and concerns to mint it, and when the government fixes the basis of the standard coin in terms of weight of the metal used. Thus in our country a fixed number of grains of gold of a certain fineness is the basis of the dollar which is the unit in our system. Coins never contain as much pure metal as their value indicates, and from remote times governments have arrogated to themselves the right to reduce the amount of metal in coins for the sake of the profits derived from "debasement of the content." Paper money is no more than a promissory note given by the government to its citizens with the guarantee that it can be redeemed in metal. Since it can be handled so much more easily than metal, paper money is rapidly coming to be the form of exchange used throughout the civilized world.

### 3. Value's Measuring Rod

Once a man's desire for a thing was known by the number of skins, or beads, or arrows, or wives he was willing to give in exchange for it. Today we estimate the value of things in terms of money. Ask anyone you please how much a thing is worth, and the answer will



be given in terms of money. Ask how much a man is worth, and the same kind of answer will usually be received. If a laborer produces so many shoes a day, makes so many bushels of corn in a year, raises so many head of cattle, or does anything else of a productive nature, he measures the worth of his products in terms of money, hence is measuring so much of his life in the same way. Since, then, we measure all things by the money standard, and since life issues forth in the products of our minds and hands, how can one claim that his money is his own with any more certainty of sustaining his claim than has he who declares that his life is his own and that the fields and forests and mines, the air and water and sunlight are his own? Money is only a standard by which we measure the products and possessions of life, hence in a true sense measures life itself.

## II. THE STRENGTH OF GOLD

Gold has long been the primary basis of the world's money. It is rare enough to be precious. It exists in almost every large area of the earth's land surface and may now be extracted from the water of the sea. The all-seeing eye of the Creator foresaw the needs of his creatures and placed this metal at their disposal wherever they might live and need it. Having become the basic medium of exchange, it readily gained a subtle power over the minds of men, and so, whatever the form of currency used by a nation, its citizens usually think of values in terms of gold. Everyone should therefore learn to estimate aright the strength of gold lest he become the slave thereof. Wherein does its strength lie?

### *1. It Provides Power*

Wealth is the accumulation of the products of nature and of the labors of men and women. It is gained either by one's own physical efforts, or through cunning which enables him to command what has been created by another. There is little difference between owning a man's body outright and in having the power to use that body

in the production of goods. The struggle between capital and labor has remained unsettled because we have not solved the age-old problem of finding how far one may rightly go in appropriating what another produces. Once a sensible, honest standard may be established by which to determine the relative value of one person's capital and genius and another's labor, and when we may bring all parties to accept that standard as just and equitable, we shall have hope of ending the warfare between the two forces in industrialism. Until that has been done, it is inevitable that governments must step in as unbiased umpires or arbiters, else he who has the means of acquiring wealth out of the labors of others will continue to grow in power while they who labor will eventually be debased to the level of slavery. It is the massing of wealth in the hands of ungodly men and women that brings upon humanity most of its social, economic, and political ills, and unless this trend in society is changed by the Spirit of Christ, there can be no hope of a day when every man may enjoy "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Whether it be a small sum of wealth in the hand of an evil man or a large sum does not change the issues, for all wealth represents power, and power wrongly applied results in injury to the social body.

## *2. It Produces Problems*

Since money provides the holder with extra power, it inevitably presents to him serious problems which the good steward will want to solve aright, for upon the proper use of his money depends so much of his ability to represent Jesus Christ in a worthy way.

He must, first of all, learn how to *make it honestly*. Too long has the world been dominated by ideals which had their origin before the fundamental principles of the Christian religion had a chance to shape the thinking of mankind. The pagan philosophical dogma, "Might makes Right," has prevailed, and the masses have heretofore yielded, because they either were deceived by

ignorant priests or were incapable of organizing their forces to defend themselves. The dogma still holds sway in many quarters, and it is high time for a generation to arise who will be wise enough to discard the dread concept and substitute therefor the ideal of Jesus Christ as expressed in the Golden Rule. Not until then can we hope to get all men to make their money honestly.

It is not enough, however, to make money by honest methods. Everyone should learn to *conserve it* when once it is earned. We readily admit the sin of wantonness in wasting one's life; but so often money, which is life's product, is squandered with no thought that to waste it thus is sinful. At one extreme we find the miser worshipping his hoard of gold with pagan devotion. At the other we find the wastrel squandering every cent that comes into his hands. Each is to be pitied. The good steward will be guilty neither of idolatrous hoarding of money nor of sinful waste of it. True conservation of wealth is that use of it which brings the greatest permanent good to the whole of society.

The wise man is he who learns also how to *use his money discreetly*. Every dollar of it should be used for the advancement of the welfare of mankind. Not one penny should ever be paid in tribute to the devil through any of the agencies which debase manhood, destroy morals, pollute the fountains of social and political life, and bring ruin in their wake. No man has the right to spend his money as he will; he has the right only to spend it for that which will bring good into the stream of life. If gold is more powerful than one's will, he becomes its slave. The good steward will make it his slave instead.

### 3. Character's Acid Test

The supreme test of character is found where money is found. Three questions will enable one to examine himself and to determine just how strong or weak his character is. (1) What would I do to make money? (2) What would I do with money if I had plenty of it? (3)

What do I do with the money I have? If one would stoop to any act whereby he might deceive another for the purpose of gaining money, his character is weak. If he would tell a falsehood in order to make a sale of goods, he is a slave of gold. If he desires anything exclusively for his own personal pleasure, especially for the gratification of the lusts of his flesh, and he would purchase it regardless of the possible damage to others, he cannot handle riches aright. If even a dime or a penny of his own store of money is wasted for the gratification of some whim or fancy of his carnal nature, he would be cursed by much money. Weaknesses in moral fiber reveal themselves under a searching, fearless self-examination, and he who has discovered them should place a strong guard about his life, and watch and pray lest his money, whether much or little be earned, shall conquer him. One cannot forget the story of Midas who was given the power to turn to gold anything that he touched only to find that gold is nothing compared with the precious living persons and vital things about us.

### III. THE CURSE OF MONEY

Life is a very dear thing to the average person. He seeks to retain it and to hold it for future use and enjoyment. But when it has been converted into dollars and cents, he somehow forgets that it is a part of himself. How foolish it is, then, for one to allow money, the substance of his past labors, to turn and bite like a deadly aspl!

#### 1. *A Pagan Idol*

Many people make of money an idol which they worship with as much devotion as any heathen ever showed when he bowed before a grotesque, graven image. The world calls them misers; God classes them as idolaters, worshipers of mammon. In the story of the rich fool (Luke 12: 16-21) we have an illustration of one who comes to put his wealth before all else. "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many

years" is the idle boast of one who does not know the meaning of stewardship, who has never learned to know that he owns nothing except as God gives him temporary control over it. His attitude toward wealth is the attitude of our sinful world, and it is the very antithesis, the extreme opposite, of what God would have people manifest.

"Thou fool!" is a very harsh statement to come from God, but it is clear and meaningful. Imagine a slave standing in his master's yard surveying the lands, stock, barns, residence, and all else, boastfully uttering the words of the rich fool, and then sitting down to enjoy everything about him. That is exactly the picture that Jesus gave his disciples, for the rich man no more owned what he had gathered about him than the slave owns the master's property. Whoever is wise will learn from this story the real meaning of wealth and will never presume to lay claim to that which is merely entrusted to his care for so long as the Lord may please. The rich man's dependence on his money was no less foolish than the pagan's trust in his idol. "This night" may be any night; therefore, everyone who is wise will so conduct his affairs that he may be ready at any time to give a good account of his stewardship unto God.

## 2. *Lust's Tool*

Money is the instrument whereby the lusts of the flesh open the way for their gratification. The charlatan is no less to be despised than the miser; yea, he is even more reprobate, for his life finds its expression in practices that rob others of their strength and virtue. The young woman who is beset with a fanatical desire for pretty clothes and jewelry becomes the victim of her carnal lusts and, in seeking the money wherewith she may gratify her desires, is tempted to stoop to practices which destroy her moral character and ruin her life. A young man, craving "a good time" and knowing that it takes money to pay the cost of balls, automobiles, theaters, and other such things, listens to the lure of the

tempter, embezzles funds entrusted to his care, and ends his days in a prison cell, or as a social outcast whom none trusts.

Money sent the rich young man away from Jesus with sad heart (Matt. 19: 22). Money caused Judas to override the last appeal which the messages of Jesus may have made to his heart and to go out of this world branded with the shame of an unforgettable crime. The love of money peoples our institutions of vice with once attractive and splendid young women, fills our jails with criminals, breaks to pieces the noble dreams of young politicians, and eats out the foundations of social and political institutions. The uncontrolled, unsanctified use of money results in reveling, drunkenness, debauchery, and ultimately in the complete destruction of character and influence for good. In other words, he who would have his money satisfy his carnal desires eventually discovers to his own dismay that it has become a heartless taskmaster driving its owner to excesses which destroy the body and blight and damn the soul.

### 3. *Shylock's Lancet*

Few stories have done more to make young people despise the wicked covetousness of man than that from Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, wherein Shylock comes to take his pound of flesh from over the heart of covetous, money-loving usurer prepares to cut into the one who could not repay a loan. When the greedy, flesh of his helpless victim, the spectator finds it difficult to remember that it is only a play, and wants to go on the stage and break the arm which holds the cruel lancet. If we are so moved by reading or witnessing such a play, why are we so dull of heart and mind when the real thing is being performed all about us? One who plans to deceive his fellow in order to secure his money is no less base than Shylock. When one lends his money at usurious interest and then forecloses a mortgage upon his helpless debtor, he is playing the part of Shylock. He who seeks money by means of exorbitant profits,

starvation wages, sweatshop methods, excessive rentals, gambling devices, the sale of intoxicants, opiates and such, is slicing the pounds of flesh from the lives of others for the gratification of his own lusts. He who engages to labor for another and then loafes on the job or does shoddy work is taking Shylock's unfair advantage of an innocent victim.

#### 4. *Diana's Altar*

Luke gives us a striking picture of the extreme limit to which men will go when money has become their god. Ephesus was the center of the worship of the pagan goddess Diana. As is true today in Catholic-dominated lands, many people made their livings by manufacturing and selling images and other objects which were used in religious services. When Paul's preaching began to make inroads upon the business which these people plied, they rose in rebellion against him, a riot ensued, and he and his friends were compelled to leave the city (Acts 19: 21-41). The people from whom the silversmiths secured their gain, poor dupes of the wicked business, turned with the despoilers to rend their would-be friends.

It is just like that today. The saloon-keeper, the owner of a gambling house, the manufacturers and displayers of sensuous, debasing moving pictures, the proprietors of roadhouses and public dance halls, they who make merchandise out of commercialized Sunday amusements—these and many others are making offerings for them who worship the goddess of lust and pleasure. The disciple of Jesus comes with a message which wins people from patronizing such things. A hue and cry is raised by these "silversmiths of Ephesus," and the tragic thing is that hosts of the people who are being despoiled turn with them to berate and persecute the would-be friend and protector.

#### IV. SACRED COIN

Life is a sacred thing, and since money represents a portion of one's life, it too should be considered a very



sacred thing. There is nothing evil in money itself; the trouble lies within the hearts of them who have the money or who desire it. Thievery, according to Jesus, consists not only in taking that which belongs to another without his knowledge or consent, but also in harboring the desire to take it in such a way. Whoever, therefore, wishes money to be a blessing to him must learn to use it when possessed in such a way as to bless all and injure none. How may he do this?

### *1. Paying Honest Debts*

God has planted, even in the heart of the heathen, an instinctive recognition of the rights of other people. Society has enacted laws safeguarding those rights, among which is the right to peaceful possession of one's own goods. When one individual agrees to part with some of his goods for a fair consideration, justice demands that he who receives the goods shall pay what he agrees. We are living in an age when masses of people have forgotten this truth, when it becomes more and more common for people to refuse to pay their debts. If, under the law of man, one is obliged to make payment for debts made, how can the Christian, the steward of God, hope to escape condemnation under God's infallible moral law if he wilfully evades the payment of his honest obligations? Money used to pay one's debts is sacred coin, and it not only brings honor to him who so uses it, but adds rich treasures to his spiritual store.

### *2. Buying Needed Goods*

Wholesome food, sensible raiment, healthful exercise and recreation, comfortable homes, and true culture are essential to the fullest and most profitable living. Every dollar therefore that is necessary for such is sacred coin and is going to advance the interests of him who spends and of all whose lives are touched by him. On the contrary, money spent for injurious foods and drinks, lavish and useless raiment, wild and harmful exercise, all kinds of questionable amusements, and for elaborate temporary shelters, is unholy. The good steward should



make a careful study of his temporal needs. He will learn the rules of dietetics that he may know what foods and drinks are healthful and strengthening. He will never become the slave of fashion, but will govern his purchases of clothing by good common sense. The young woman who is planning for a life of largest service will never aspire to be a fashion's butterfly. The most healthful exercise known to man is that found in the pursuit of worthy daily tasks, but when these do not furnish all the physical exercise needed, the good steward will select wholesome recreation under the advice of one competent to give it; and will never seek it in the sordid affairs of the pleasure-mad race of our day. Debasing amusements will be shunned, and money will never be spent to gratify an insane desire for vain show in one's place of abode.

### *3. Relieving Distress*

Almsgiving is the word of our Bible for the use of money in relieving distress. Many people have a perverted idea of what it means. Likewise, many have an erroneous notion about the words of Jesus concerning giving alms. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth" (Matt. 6: 3) applies to our efforts to relieve the poor and needy. It was never intended to be a subterfuge behind which stingy Christians could hide when they do not want to give as much into the Lord's storehouse as he demands.

When the words are correctly understood, their wisdom becomes apparent. There is no surer way to injure men and women than to make exhibition of their poverty, no more certain method of debasing them than to give them alms in public. Any system of aiding the poor through a dole, or by means of charity dispensed through political organizations, debases the recipients and ultimately makes paupers of most of them. Jesus understood this, and so bade all who give alms to do it in secret, to render the service in such a quiet, unobtrusive way that none save them who are helped may know. Thus the respect and self-esteem of the poor are safe-

guarded, and no handicap retards them when they seek to go alone again. Money used for the relief of distress is sanctified when it is given according to the rule laid down by the Lord.

In addition to direct almsgiving, sacred coin may go to eleemosynary institutions— orphanages, hospitals, old people's homes, and such. In the orphanages many little ones have a chance to live and grow as more favored children do. Annually in the hospitals thousands of people have their bodies healed. Homes for the aged are havens of rest and peace when the world no longer has a place for those whose bodies have worn out and whose vigor is gone. Asylums provide refuge for those who are too deficient in mind or body to be a part of society. Every dollar given to support these agencies of mercy is like the touch of the Master's hand upon the brow of the sick child, or upon the eyes of the blind.

#### 4. *Working for God*

The finest use to which one may put his money is to advance the boundaries of the kingdom of Christ. Try, if you can, to imagine what this world would be like today if it had not been for the men and women who have laid their money upon the altar of God to be used in supporting consecrated workers who have given their time and talents for the uplift of man and the glory of God. The very foundations of modern society are products of the sacred coin of those who loved the Lord more than they did their own physical desires.

Money may work directly for God in two ways: (1) *By supporting the ministry done by one's church*—No Christian can be a good steward and not be a good church member. "The field is the world" (Matt. 13: 38), but one must first evangelize that portion of it where he lives. The home base is essential to the permanence of any program, and if Christian people expect to make substantial progress in distant places they must first of all build strong the foundations at home. It is not enough just to join a church; one must help to make it vigorous

and healthy so that it will grow and expand in influence. To be faithful in attending church services, in winning the lost, in visiting the sick, and in living a clean life brings honor to the Lord's cause; but there is a further obligation, and the good steward gladly accepts it and gives a portion of his money to help maintain the local ministry of his church. (2) *By having part in the general enterprises*—For the sake of convenience we divide our mission fields into state, home, and foreign; but none can define their boundaries and declare honestly that his responsibility ceases at any of them. Every true Christian steward knows the world is the field and that he is commanded to make disciples of all nations. He also knows that our Christian schools furnish the missionary force. He will not therefore allow his love of money, his desire for personal gain, or his prejudices and false notions to deprive him of the joy of being wholly obedient unto the Lord of the household by supporting them all.

#### 5. *Disposing of God's Portion*

If every Christian should support his church and its program, be loyal to his denomination and its undertakings, what is the best plan to follow? Southern Baptist statesmen have answered this question. Out of the experiences of the past has grown the unified, simplified, scriptural plan known as the Co-operative Program. It begins with the New Testament basis of "systematic and proportionate" giving (1 Cor. 16: 1-2). It recognizes and provides for an inclusive labor such as Jesus commanded (Acts 1: 8). It is based upon sound business principles, distributes the burden according to the ability of each laborer (2 Cor. 8: 12-15), and brings the largest possible returns at the least possible cost. Every essential local need is included in it, and every essential provision for planting the gospel at home and among heathen peoples is also included.

The good steward will strive to enlist his church in support of this fellowship enterprise, will seek to get every member to be a regular systematic and proportion-

ate giver to the program, will strive always to induce his church to give a fair proportion of its income to the general denominational work, and when these have been done, will set an example by putting his tithes into the church treasury and giving generous offerings to help meet especial emergency needs.

Once upon a time a great building was planned. It was sorely needed by the community. A mass meeting of citizens was called, and they were asked to provide the necessary funds. "We need the building," they all admitted. "It will prove of great good to our community, and we are well able to build it," they confessed. But when the pledges were in, it was found that only one-fourth of them had been willing to help meet the cost of construction. Three-fourths of the population wanted the building and expected to profit from it, but they were unwilling to sacrifice anything for the sake of the good to be gained.

That building represents the kingdom of Christ. Plans have been drawn, and the cost of extension has been ascertained. All along through the centuries mass meetings of citizens have been called in church houses and tabernacles and halls. The challenge has been presented. Christians admit the need and confess their ability to provide the funds. But when the pledges are in, we witness the tragic littleness of human nature, for usually about three-fourths of our church members are unwilling to join in the sacrifices necessary for the successful promotion of the task before us. Until all Christians know the real nature of money and are willing to invest it in things which abide, there will continue to be need for teaching the stewards of God that the approval of his divine spirit upon their lives is worth more than any money they may amass by withholding their tithes and offerings.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Get from a good encyclopedia an account of the manner in which men came to use coined money.
2. Why are standard weights, measures, moneys, and such necessary for the welfare of humanity?
3. Give some reasons why it is imperative that the national Government should have control of these standards.
4. Make a list of things you would immediately purchase if you had an unlimited checking account in the bank. Put a cross mark on every one of them that would not materially increase your usefulness to society.
5. Read Act 1, Scene 3, and Act 4, Scene 1, in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*.
6. Read Acts 19: 21-41



## CHAPTER VII

### THE LORD'S PORTION

#### OUTLINE

##### I. THE TITHE INAUGURATED

1. Abram's Battle and Victory
2. The Offering to Melchizedek
3. Basis of Giving
  - Recognition of a higher authority
  - Confession of obligation
  - Return of just dues
  - Expression of love and thanks

##### II. TITHING MADE LEGAL

1. Moses and the Law:
  - Revelation
  - Basic principles never end
2. Uses of Tithes:
  - Paying taxes
  - Maintaining worship
  - Charity
3. Hypocrisy of Tithers

##### III. THE NOBLER CONCEPT

1. Jesus and the Law
2. The Minimum, not a Standard
3. Real Giving:
  - Begins with self
  - Measured by ability
4. Fallacies Examined:
  - (1) Tithing, the basis of temporal prosperity
  - (2) Tithe what is left
  - (3) Tithe too much for some

**IV. GOD'S PORTION, ALL**

1. Money, Concentrated Life
2. Slave no Right to Decide
3. Master Needs All
4. Three Obligations:
  - (1) For oneself
  - (2) The needs of others
  - (3) Sending the gospel
5. Safe in the Master's Hands



## CHAPTER VII

### THE LORD'S PORTION

#### Stewardship of Tithes and Offerings

These ought ye to have done—Matthew 23: 23.

For generations people have quibbled over the tithe and its relation to New Testament religion. A careful and unbiased study of the Bible will help us to know the truth, and whoever is afraid of the truth is afraid of Christ; whoever will not live according to the truth refuses to obey Christ, for he is the Truth. Every Christian should be willing to make an honest, careful study of the subject, and to do so he must lay aside any prejudices he may have in his mind about it.

#### I. THE TITHE INAUGURATED

Just why did anyone ever come to give tithes? To answer the question we must go back to Abraham, and even with him we fail to find a complete answer. It is very evident to any student of the Bible that the tithe did not originate with the Mosaic law. It had its historic beginning in the faith of Abraham. The custom of paying tithes as an expression of devotion to God is hidden in the mysterious long ago.

##### 1. *Abram's Battle and Victory*

The first record we have of tithing is found in Genesis 14. Lot had been captured by Chedorlaomar, an Elamite king. When Abram heard of the outrage against his kinsman, he armed his servants, made pursuit, defeated the enemy, released Lot, and regained all the booty that had been taken away. It was no little undertaking upon which he went forth, for his band of warriors was evidently much smaller than that of the enemy. The presence of Tidal, king of nations (Gen 14: 1), with

the invaders indicates that the enemy were rather formidable in their numbers. To win a victory over such a force was cause for great rejoicing on the part of Abram. To return his captured kinsman and household was even a greater cause for joy.

## *2. The Offering to Melchizedek*

There was once a mysterious ruler in Jerusalem or Sion. Among the letters written to Amenophis IV, Pharaoh of Egypt, about 1400 B.C. (letters now in a museum in Berlin, Germany) there is one sent by a king of Jerusalem in which he declares, "Neither my father nor my mother set me in this place; the mighty arm of the mighty king established me in my father's house." These words from the king of Sion could explain the declaration "Without father, without mother, without descent" (Heb. 7: 3), if they referred only to the kingship of Melchizedek. But they fail to account for the following words in the same verse, "having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually." Just who this mystery man was cannot be known from the records. It is enough to believe that God established him on the throne in Jerusalem that he might be a source of strength and spiritual blessing to Abram in an hour of great need.

Why did Abram give the tithe? That is the important question for the student of the Bible. Very evidently he did it as an expression of his great joy over the victory that had been won. When the king of Salem came out to meet him, all the generous impulses of his nature were clamoring for expression. Furthermore, he did it because he recognized in Melchizedek the representative of Jehovah who had called him out of his own country and sent him into the new land. Abram may have known Melchizedek before this encounter. God, who had led him to the country, could surely make known to him the nature of this great king-priest, even if he had never before heard of him.

### 3. *Basis of Giving*

The gift of Abram can be understood only in connection with his faith in Jehovah. There was in it the *recognition of a higher authority* than himself. Ruler over a strong band of people though he was, and victor over superior forces as he had just been, the faith which led him out of Ur did not fail to make him know when one greater than he was present. He admitted by his gift that this priest of the most high God was, by virtue of his divine office, superior to him in spiritual things. Furthermore, he gave as a *confession of his obligation* to God who had been his helper in time of need. He was too wise to assume full credit for the victory which had been won. Too many chances had been incurred by him and his forces for him not to believe that Jehovah had protected him and guided him in his campaign. Again he gave tithes as the *return to God of just dues*. Had someone instructed him before time about the matter? We cannot know. We do know, however, that God has had to make known every principle of his divine will and plan through revelation given to some man. Hence, it is enough to declare that in his own good time God chose Abram for the purpose of making known to humanity the moral principle involved in giving the tithe to holy agents and agencies.

But the gift was so spontaneous, so readily made, that we know it came forth also as an *expression of love and thanks*. Since he refused to accept any of the captured booty, his tithes must have been paid out of his own possessions. During all the days since he had left his home in Chaldea, there must have been growing in his heart an abiding appreciation for what Jehovah was doing for him. But during his journey to Canaan, during his stay in Egypt, and following his return to Canaan, he had had no public occasion to show his love. With the coming of Melchizedek he had his first opportunity and readily seized it.

## II. TITHING MADE LEGAL

The idea that the tithe is not morally binding on Christians is erroneous. It was included in the Mosaic law, not to make it moral and right, but because it is so. The law against murder was included likewise, not to make it moral to refrain from murder, but because it is, and has always been so. Whoever would refuse to pay his tithes because tithing was commanded under the old dispensation surely has never learned the truth about moral legislation.

### 1. *Moses and the Law*

When once a nation has adopted a constitution, it becomes the basis of all rules under which the people live. But behind the written constitution must first be the basic ideas out of which it is made. It is even so with the moral laws which were revealed to Moses; they came as an expression of the nature of God which is such that certain basic principles of law and order, both in the natural and the moral realms, had to exist; and because they did exist they shaped the fundamental rules governing man in his attitude toward God and in his relations with other people about him. These rules, known as the Ten Commandments, may well be called the moral constitution of God's kingdom.

*Revelation* concerning the tithe did not begin with Moses on Mt. Sinai. Already Abraham had recognized it (Gen. 14: 17-20). Jacob knew it and included in his vows to God the payment of the tithe. Moses received instructions about tithes while in Sinai (Lev. 27: 30-34), and later was told how they were to be used (Num. 18: 24). Tithing, then, was added as a rule of worship and service because it was involved in the constitutional principles.

It should be borne in mind that *basic principles never end*. If a thing is morally right, it cannot be wrong. Hence, when one really believes what the Old Testament reveals concerning tithing, he must admit that it origi-

nated not in a man made legal system but out of the deep experiences of one who knew God and who sought to please him. Every Christian will therefore look upon the tithe as a moral and not a legal obligation. His next problem then will be to learn how to use the tithes which are his to bestow.

### *2. Uses of Tithes*

At first the tithe was given as an expression of thanksgiving and devotion, and was used by him who received it according to his good will. But after their coming into the Promised Land, the Israelites, according to the revelation which they had from God concerning the tabernacle and its service, made it the support of the ministers who served the people. God pronounced the tithe "holy unto the Lord" (Lev. 27: 30). When the Levites were set apart to serve in the tabernacle, the tithes were devoted to their support (Num. 28: 24). Likewise, tithes were consecrated to the care of the poor (Deut. 26: 12-13). In Paul's declaration, "They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9: 14), we have a New Testament rule for the support of the ministry and it evidently implies the uses of the same funds which were once consecrated to the Levites. In short, tithes were used for the support of the ministry which included their education and the conduct of the schools in the synagogues by the priests, and they were also used for certain needed charities, a special "over and above" tithe being given every third year for that purpose.

### *3. Hypocrisy of Tithers*

In the beginning the tithe was declared holy unto the Lord and specific instructions were given about safeguarding it (Lev. 27: 30-33). Israel was warned against becoming careless in the discharge of the sacred duty of protecting the tithes and offerings (Deut. 12: 5-11). But as the years went by the people began to lapse in their moral life and to make the tithe a cloak for their wrongdoing. Amos cried aloud against the hypocrisy of those

who took their tithes and offerings to Bethel, yet carried along their wicked habits (Amos 4: 4-5). Later we find Israel not even giving the tithes (Mal. 3: 8-10). One of the most caustic declarations ever made by our Lord was hurled against the scribes and Pharisees who paid their tithes, even of little things, yet ignored the weightier matters of the law (Matt. 23: 23). One can find nowhere in the Word of God grounds for ignoring and evading the responsibility of observing the moral principles that lie behind tithing; but woe to him who makes his tithes and special offerings a cloak for his unholy deeds!

### III. THE NOBLER CONCEPT

The development of a people may readily be measured by the amount of law which is required to control and direct them. The more money a people must pay to maintain law and order, the less real culture they have. Real Christians do not need a rigid system of rules to compel them to do right; they do right because of the inner urge of regenerated souls. Hence they give tithes and offerings not because Moses included them in his regulations, but out of the same spirit which prompted Abraham to tithe.

#### 1. *Jesus and the Law*

When Jesus spoke of the law in its relation to the temporal life of mankind, he very emphatically declared, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matt. 5: 17-18). In giving the Golden Rule (Matt. 7: 12) he declared that it is the law and the prophets. On two simple commandments hang all the law and the prophets (Matt. 22: 40). Instead of destroying or weakening the law, he only made it more clear, definite, and inclusive.

Jesus is the *end of the law only* for righteousness (Rom. 10: 4), for man is not justified by works of the law (Gal. 2: 16; 3: 11) which is merely a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ (Gal. 3: 24). The law made nothing perfect (Heb. 7: 19). It is the agency by which sin is revealed unto man (Rom. 3: 20; 5: 20; 7: 7). It is inconceivable that God, who is just and wise, should have abolished any moral principle, or done away with any rule by which it is enforced. Since, then, the law still holds—every single statute—and not one jot or tittle has been abrogated or repealed, and since man could not keep the law, it was necessary that provision be made for his redemption from the curse of the law. That was provided in Jesus. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8: 2). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us"; (Gal. 3: 13). Since man could not be saved by the law because of his depraved nature, Christ came to be the end of the law for righteousness; that is, that "The righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us" (Rom. 8: 4). It is foolish, therefore, to argue that Jesus abolished the tithe. He abolished no moral law; he came to satisfy the law that he might save.

## *2. The Minimum, not a Standard*

From the very beginning the tithe was considered to be the minimum for giving unto the Lord and his causes. Offerings were included, and they cannot be overlooked by anyone who wishes to conform to the will of God. The illustration of the renter fits the case. A tenant is compelled by his contract to pay a stated rental to the landlord. He has no option in the matter. But, if the landlord is a generous and gracious one and makes certain concessions to the tenant not included in the contract, the renter, if he has an appreciative soul, feels an urgent desire to reciprocate. Everyone who has visited the large plantations of our land knows how delighted the tenants are to carry special gifts to such



a landlord. When therefore God is so good to his children and provides them so many extra blessings, it is only natural that they should want to offer him more than the basic amount of their increase.

### 3. *Real Giving*

Giving is not a matter of compulsion; it is rather the result of impulsion. The Christian should not be compelled either by ecclesiastical rules or by a sense of duty to give. If he is truly consecrated, he will be impelled by love. Real giving then begins with self. First they "gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8:5). Whoever will not give himself in wholehearted abandon to the cause of another is not apt to give very much of his money, for if the life is not surrendered, how can money, the product of life, be offered? The proof of the sincerity of love is not found in one's willingness to offer his money, but in his desire to conform to the will of him to whom the money is given as an expression of love (2 Cor. 8:8). The scribes and Pharisees gave tithes of mint, anise, and cummin, but they reserved the right to spend their lives as they would. They were therefore denounced by the Lord as hypocrites.

Real giving is also measured by one's ability. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him . . ." is the rule for Christian giving (1 Cor. 16: 2). These words make it clear that the tithe cannot be considered as a standard. He who earns ten dollars a week has given much when he pays his tithe, but he who earns one hundred dollars per week has not given in proportion when he gives only a tithe. While tithing should be stressed for all people as the minimum, we should never lead them to think that a tithe of a large income meets the requirements of the Lord Jesus, for so to do will result in placing the heavier burden upon those least able to carry it. When the Christian understands fully that he is not his own, that he is bought with a price, he will not call what he has his own, but will consecrate all of it to the glory of



God. No less than his tithe will be dedicated to the support of his church and its ministry throughout the world, and he will give over and above the tithe in proportion to his earnings and the necessary personal responsibilities which make demands upon his income.

#### 4. *Fallacies Examined*

Some very harmful fallacies have been set forth by people who either are too ardent champions of the tithe, or else seek to evade the responsibility placed upon them by the Word of God. Among these we should be warned against three very hurtful ones:

(1) *Tithing, the basis of temporal prosperity.*—Some ardent tithers love to quote Malachi 3: 8-12 and lay great stress upon the temporal danger of robbing God. All too often they seek to make people believe that in order to prosper they must pay their tithes, and they assure them that their temporal ills are due entirely to their robbing God. It is a dangerous teaching which leads men and women to feel that God can be pleased with the mere giving of money to his cause, and it will inevitably lead to the legalism which brought the scribes and Pharisees to where they paid their tithes and held in utter contempt the weightier matters of the law. The New Testament teaches that unless one's heart is right, his deeds will be evil. It is far more scriptural, therefore, for us to preach and teach that, when our hearts are right in their attitudes toward God, our gifts will be forthcoming; and that, when we live and love and serve as we should, God will bless us. Many a man has been persuaded to become a tither by the pleas based upon Malachi only to find before many years had passed that all his money was gone, that he did not prosper.

(2) *Tithe what is left* after expenses of living have been paid. Such a theory denies to God the right of interest in one's own food, clothing, shelter, and protection. The Jews had to bring the first fruits of all their increase. They were not allowed to deduct the cost of taxes, food, and shelter, and tithe the remainder. Neither can the

Christian deduct these things if he is to be honest with God. If the entire income of the salaried man is to be tithed, the entire income of any other man should be tithed.

(3) *The tithe is too much for some.*—The late noted Baptist layman, Fred Freeman of Denver, Colorado, gave a testimony which should be an inspiration to everyone. Years ago he went to El Paso, Texas, an invalid. After he began to regain his health, he secured employment. His first pay check was for forty dollars, and when he had cashed it, he took out the tithe. Upon being told that he could not afford to do so, he declared, "I cannot afford not to do so. The Lord and I can manage on thirty-six dollars far better than I can manage on forty dollars without God." He gave, not from a sense of compulsion, not because of any legal demands upon him, but out of a sense of devotion to God, sincere love for his cause, and absolute faith in the promise of protection and support which his Lord had given him. Such giving was pleasing to God who prospered him in the years that followed and made him a mighty power for good among Christians of the entire nation. No one should ever be guilty of trying to make people believe that because their incomes are small, they have a right to deny themselves the blessing of consecrating at least the minimum portion of their goods to holy things.

#### IV. GOD'S PORTION, ALL

We go back to the beginning of these studies and find there that the bondsman of Christ has no claim on anything which he may earn or possess, except the right to use it under the direction of the Holy Spirit while here on earth. Stewardship of money implies the right use of that which is committed to one's hands for the welfare of all people and not for the gratification of carnal desires.

##### 1. *Money, Concentrated Life*

Life is so often embraced in our money that we may

well say, "Money represents a portion of my past life that I still possess here on earth." Since, then, my life is not my own, but is a trust committed to me from God, I cannot honestly claim that my money, any of it, is my own to do with as I please. The good steward of Christ will not waste his life in sinful ways, and he most surely should admit that every cent of his money should be held inviolate for such uses as will honor God and increase the sway of righteousness on the earth.

### *2. Slave no Right to Decide*

How shall I spend my money? Before the question can be answered aright, one must first of all recognize the simple truth that the slave has no right to spend the master's wealth without doing so in keeping with the master's will. My money is not my own, therefore I may not use it as I will. I must consider the interests of him who has placed it in my hands and use it in keeping with his divine will. The will of God should be supreme in deciding all issues for the Christian. He knows what is best, so in making plans for the use of money the good steward will consult him. When I spend my money after prayer and serious meditation, and after consulting the rules laid down in God's Book, I may know that it will be sanctified to my good and the Master's glory.

### *3. Master Needs All*

Let us imagine an old-time plantation. On it are hundreds of slaves. Vast acres of arable land and of forests surround the residence of the master and the cottages of the slaves. Herds of stock and flocks of poultry range over the meadows. A good master rules over the plantation. He knows the needs of each member of his household. He understands the problems that he must face every day and every year. Storehouses are erected to provide food and feed against the barren months. Provision is made for the sick, the crippled, the aged, the orphans. Carefully he plans for each day's supply of food and clothing, heat and water, rest and recreation, and worship. The sick are cared for, the sorrowing are

comforted, the dead are buried. At times he joins his tears with the tears of his people. At other times his laughter rings out with theirs. He is indeed a good master whose chief concern is not for personal gain but for the community gain.

Such a plantation would require a large income. If the needy and the helpless, the sick and the lame, are to have what they need, the hale and hearty must provide it. If no man is to be burdened with too much work, all must serve according to their several abilities. No slave on the plantation could call what he produced his own, but would have to use it for the general welfare of all and under the direction of the master. His own daily needs would be provided, and he would be laying in store for his own welfare in case he should become sick or be crippled or grow old. In such a setting, could an incorrigible slave be defended? Could one who believes in justice excuse the servant who would refuse to work, or who would seek to reserve for his own personal pleasure portions of goods which belonged to the whole?

God's great family of men occupies much the same position in his infinite order as the slaves on such a plantation. He owns the earth and the fulness thereof. He has placed at the disposal of man a vast realm of potential riches and blessings, both temporal and spiritual. He watches over his universe with sleepless eye. Not even a sparrow falls but that he is cognizant thereof. He supplies all the needs of his creatures, withholding them only whenever, in his divine wisdom, he sees that their future good depends upon temporal suffering and privation. He giveth man the ability to gain wealth (Deut. 8: 18).

#### 4. *Three Obligations*

Three distinct obligations inhere in the position which men occupy in this divine scheme of the ages. (1) Everyone may spend *on himself* whatever is needed for his own physical welfare. But it must be kept in mind that our needs are not determined by our fickle desires,

but by the divine laws. No slave has a right to become a gormand, or a drunkard, or a thief, or a wastrel, or an indolent parasite. Likewise no man can indulge his appetites, give way to his depraved desire for things not his own, waste his substance for useless things, or prey upon human society, without paying a heavy penalty for his sins. (2) The *needs of others* must be provided for. The savage slew helpless cripples, the insane, the aged, and useless. He left orphans to die of starvation and even threw away his own surplus children. God allows for no such brutal treatment of any. The theory advocated by some thinkers of our day, that society should rid itself of all unproductive members, had its origin among pagan people. Society must provide for the care of such, and God will most surely punish the nation that thinks more of its own temporal pleasure than it does of the needs of all. (3) There is the larger and more commanding obligation which the Christian alone is going to assume, and that is the duty of *sending the gospel* of light and love and hope to the world's heathen millions. The good master on the imaginary plantation just pictured would most surely reach out to neighboring regions, take over the savages who might roam there, bring them under subjection to his will, and train them to become members of his household. To leave them alone would be to put in jeopardy all that he possessed. Likewise our God would reach out to all men, bring them under subjection to his divine will, and transform them from menaces to the future welfare of the race into wholesome, happy supporters of his eternal program. To accomplish this tremendous mission requires the aid of every member of his household. Every servant of Jesus Christ will want to have a part in it. And if it is ever accomplished, every Christian in all the world will have to bring himself to where he can gladly recognize the responsibilities of his stewardship and place his all, life and talents and funds, at the disposal of the Lord.

### 5. *Safe in the Master's Hands*

Certain parents lived on a little farm in one of our southern states. They had a large family and scrimped and saved in order that they might send the children to school and thus prepare them for the service the world needed. Neighbors often asked them why they did not save the money spent on the schools and invest it in the heavily timbered lands all about them—lands which could then be bought for a song. Their reply grew out of true wisdom. "We had rather put something into their heads and hearts than to leave something behind for empty heads and hearts." They preferred to invest in characters rather than to store up money for moral weaklings to waste.

Whoever invests his time and money in the enterprises which God has launched among men can never lose, for he is putting them into spiritual bonds, the market value of which will increase with each passing generation. His investments can never be subject to financial depressions, but on the other hand, when such strike at the foundations of man made schemes, his investments will rise in value, for always when man's plans fail God's plans appeal more strongly to those who are in need. Furthermore, investments in the program of the Almighty are not limited by time in their productivity. Only at the final judgment, when the books will be opened, will one be able to know to what extent his investments have grown.

Who then would wish to withhold from God? Who would have to be brought under compulsion in order to give his life and service and money? Who can comprehend, even dimly, the extent to which his life may grow in influence through the years and not feel like crying with Paul, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil. 3: 8).

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Read the fourteenth chapter of Genesis.
2. Discuss the difference between basic principles of life, law, etc., and the rules whereby they are enforced.
3. Should we of today make the same uses of our tithes as the Jews of Moses' day made?
4. Make a careful study of the eighth chapter of Romans in order to see the relation of the Christian to the laws of the Old Dispensation.
5. Make a list of fallacies, other than those given in this chapter, you have heard advanced either in favor of or against tithing.
6. Is the illustration of the plantation, given above, an adequate one?
7. Prepare what you think to be an ideal budget for your own church, and then estimate as accurately as you can what your church would receive each month if all the members were consistent tithers.





## CHAPTER VIII

# SANCTIFYING OUR GIFTS

## OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION: Forces Governing Human Actions

#### I. UNHOLY MOTIVES FOR GIVING

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2. To Gain Recognition
3. To Buy Power
4. To Purchase Divine Favor

#### II. THE LORD'S DESIRE

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For dependents  
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A complete budget

#### IV. REALIZING OUR GOAL

1. The Surrender
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4. The Culmination

**CHAPTER VIII**  
**SANCTIFYING OUR GIFTS**  
**Stewardship of Love**

Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity  
—1 Corinthians 13: 3.

**INTRODUCTION: Forces Governing Human Actions**

Three distinct forces determine most of the actions of men and women. One of these is law, another lust, the other love. If I study all my acts, I find that they are determined by one or another of these. Wherever law or love is not present as a determinant force in forming habits or in governing special conduct, some form of anarchy prevails. In the home the child is controlled by one or both, or else he becomes unruly and disobedient. In society, if only lust directs the citizen, he becomes a menace. In our relations to Christ and his organized kingdom movements we are not different from what we are in our secular affairs, and unless we recognize divine law and are constrained by love, we cannot be effective and efficient members of the household of faith.

Under the old dispensation the law prevailed as the determinant force in the religion of the people of God. "Thou shalt not" rang from Sinai and was repeated throughout all Israel for generations. People attended worship, gave their tithes and offerings, made their sacrifices, and sought to live up to certain standards because of the law. How poorly they did these things may be learned from a casual reading of their history in the Old Testament and from the charges made against them by the prophets. Knowing the futility of seeking to bring obedience and a high standard of morality through law, Jesus came to become the exponent of love. From the day when he began to teach his first disciples until he hung in agony on the cross, love was the theme of his

messages. And while, as already proved in these pages, he did not repeal or abrogate any portion of the moral code, he made his appeal for surrender and for obedience upon the more powerful basis of love. Any study, therefore, of the methods whereby we may properly sanctify ourselves and our money to the Lord must be made from the viewpoint of him who is love.

## I. UNHOLY MOTIVES FOR GIVING

There is but one holy motive for giving to any cause, and that is genuine love. When one really loves, no argument is needed to cause him to do a worthy part. The man who genuinely loves his fiancée finds it difficult to be sane in the expenditure of his money for gifts which will express to her his devotion. A doting parent all too often spoils a child by lavishing upon it gifts for which there is no real need. If, and when, Christians come to love their Lord and his cause as they should, they will not give from any of the following unholy motives.

### 1. *Self-Exploitation*

It is human for one to wish to advance his own interests. This trait of character underlays the fall of Eve, for she saw that the fruit was good to make one wise, and she desired to be wise. Simon the Sorcerer wished to have the gift of the Holy Spirit because it would bring power and honor to him (Acts 8: 18-19). He was willing to part with his money if only he might gain additional prestige among men. Too often people give their money to the churches and to special objects in the church programs in order to advance their own interests. Many professional and business men have even gone so far as to include in their annual budgets funds which are designated to such objects. In other words, they plan to buy support or patronage by giving to the causes of Christ. Whoever gives with any such motive behind the gift is presenting an unsanctified offering, and all the reward he will ever receive will be whatever public favor the contribution may purchase.

## *2. To Gain Recognition*

One may give his money in an unholy way by making his offerings merely to secure the praise of his fellows. There is little difference between such giving and that which is done for the sake of self-exploitation, for the motive in each case is base. Display in making one's pledges to the church budget, in presenting one's offerings on a special occasion, and the desire to have publicity in the secular and religious press for contributions that are made, constitute low, sordid grounds for one's giving and bring no reward except the praise of men. Giving one's money to special objects, making what we call designated gifts, is wrong if it is done not because there is any basic reason for so doing, but because there will be special recognition from the agency receiving the gifts. There is grave danger at this point. An individual may give five thousand dollars per year through his church, and none outside the church know it; but if he were to give the same sum to some special agency, his name would be published far and wide. Some otherwise good people seek such publicity and thus disrupt the regular flow of denominational funds by making designations instead of supporting every cause through the regular channels of the denominational budget. Any gifts presented out of a desire to gain credits are not presented in the spirit that pleases our Lord.

## *3. To Buy Power*

Unholy giving comes into play when those who possess the ability to give large sums present them for the purpose of controlling the agency to which they are given. Once a man, who happened to possess some wealth, used his money as a means of demanding recognition from his denomination. His worldly ambition spurred him to desire big places in the general meetings, and the promise of remembering his denominational agencies in his will brought the desired recognition. He used his money as a powerful whip by means of which he drove others to grant his desires. In the sight of God his motives were

as base as were those of the Pharisee who gave alms to be seen of men. Some laymen secure places on church and denominational agencies by virtue of their money. No church should countenance such a basis of giving by promoting to official positions men who have no scriptural qualification whatever; who have only money!

#### 4. *To Purchase Divine Favor*

There are many good people in the world who are honest in their belief that they can buy divine favor with their money. The history of the Catholic Church during the Dark Ages is replete with examples of the notorious extent to which people were led by their priests to seek divine favor through purchase of indulgences. They were led to believe that their money would buy temporal success and forgiveness of sins, hence filled the coffers of the church. Simon the sorcerer was utterly deceived when he thought he could purchase the gift of the Holy Spirit; but as soon as he was made to see his mistake, he begged for forgiveness. There is grave need that people everywhere be taught the truth revealed in God's Word, namely: man cannot take that which comes from God and purchase anything from God. All good works, giving included, were ordained beforetime for us to walk in them (Eph. 2: 10). How then can one use giving, which is only good work, and hope to purchase with it something else which belongs to the Owner of the money?

## II. THE LORD'S DESIRE

Very clearly has God revealed to us his desire concerning our money and all else, and the way we are to use them. He has no need for them as such; what he desires is that our possessions may be used by us in such a way as to develop our own characters and at the same time bring praise and glory to himself. He desires that our giving shall be:

### 1. *An Expression of Love*

Love calls for love. It can be satisfied with nothing less than its own self. The husband may lavish upon the

wife all kinds of treasures. He may fill her days with amusements, and whatever money may purchase for her comfort and pleasure; but if she really loves him, these things alone can never satisfy the cravings which her love creates. Never until he comes to her with evidence of an affection that is akin to hers can she be satisfied. A mother's love demands love from her children in return. She can never be content with lavish gifts from a wayward, indifferent son, however rich and generous he may be; or without the love of her daughter, it matters not how much else she may give. Holy human love, such as that of a devoted wife for her husband, or a mother for her child, are but reflexes of the sacred love of God for his people. He cannot be content with our gifts unless they are accompanied by our sincere love.

## *2. A Proof of Loyalty*

Holy giving is the best proof of one's loyalty to God and devotion to his cause. The modest little widow who passed by the treasury and dropped into it all her living (Mark 12: 41-44) was prompted by no other motive than devotion to the service of God which the Temple maintained. The Pharisee, who sounded the trumpet before him in the streets when he would give his alms, was prompted by no such motive, but on the other hand sought only the praise of men. Had he been loyal to God, he would have slipped away and given his alms secretly in the name of God so that only the recipient might know and thus glorify God.

Giving one's money out of a sense of devotion to the causes of Christ is more than mere lip service. Since the average person loves his money more than almost anything else except his own life, he has no surer way of proving his loyalty to the Master than to give it. And when he understands the relation between the honor of Christ and the honor of his body as represented in every New Testament church, he who gives, will, under normal conditions, put his gifts into the church treasury, for by so doing he makes it sure that the church and not

himself will receive the praise of the public. Millions of dollars of Christian money never go into the treasuries of the churches of Jesus Christ, because his disciples have never been properly taught, and because all too often the churches have not had a program which provides for all the demands which Christ makes upon his disciples. When our church budgets include provisions for all necessary charity, as well as for their own expenses and for the general educational, benevolent, and missionary programs, then may we expect the millions now going into fraternal and other secular charity channels to pass through our churches and thereby glorify their great Head, our Lord. Loyalty to Jesus will constrain every Christian to see that all his gifts pass through the treasury of his church so that it may receive the praises evoked by the gifts and thus reflect them to its Lord and King.

### *3. A Means of Discipline*

There is no better piece of personal discipline than to bring oneself to where regular, systematic, and proportionate giving is made a part of life's program. Jesus desires that we do this. He has given the basis of discipleship in these words, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16: 24). These words mean that one must practice self-denial as a habit, be concerned all the time about lost souls, and be obedient all the way, if he is to be a faithful follower of Christ. Self-denial finds its supremest test when one comes to part with his money, for in so doing he gives that which brings indulgence to any desire of his flesh. No finer means of discipline can be found, therefore, than that which the disciple practices when he is a consistent, honest, and faithful giver of his money.

Who has not wondered at the strange ability of Jews to earn money? Who has not heard the question, Why is it so easy for Jews to succeed in business? It seems that, apart from God's promises to bless them, there is a

psychological explanation. Could any race of people be trained generation after generation to keep careful records of their incomes in order to know how much their tithes would be and not develop a peculiar genius for making and conserving money? Could any people be led generation after generation for three thousand years to desire to give tithes to God without at the same time developing a genius for increasing those tithes? Indeed, the Jews furnish a commanding example of the value of giving as a means of discipline. Young Christians can hardly estimate aright the benefits to be derived from the honest, accurate bookkeeping necessary to scriptural giving.

The story of the farmer and his smokehouse of fine meat also illustrates the value of giving as a means of discipline. This man had a house full of well-cured meat, among it many hams—rich, luscious, mellowed country hams. Following a sermon one day he was moved to give something to a needy family near him. Food being their chief need, he decided to give a piece of meat along with other provisions. When he entered the smokehouse, he intended to give a piece of bacon or perhaps a shoulder. But when he stood under the rows of rich hams, he remembered what the preacher had said and decided to substitute a ham for the cheaper grade. He picked down a small one and turned to the door, but was stayed by the still, small voice which asked, "Is that a real gift?" He turned, and for a moment stood torn between his own selfishness and the desire to be generous. Finally, he hung the small ham back on its peg, bowed his head in prayer for a moment, then lifting his eyes to the tiers of meat said, "I shall give the best ham in the lot, because to do less will be to yield to my own selfish nature." He did so, took down the finest piece of meat he had and went with happy heart to make his offering to the poor. He had made giving a means of discipline to a sinful nature.



### III. DISTRIBUTING OUR MONEY

The disciple who has come to realize the meaning of stewardship of life will want to make a careful study of the most sensible and scriptural uses to which he may put his gifts. No good servant is careless in the use of that which is committed to his hands. He wants everything which he handles to bring the largest returns to his master. Surely, then, he will be careful indeed to see that his money is placed where it will be safeguarded at all times, and where it will do the maximum amount of good for the world. Three main divisions may be made of one's money.

#### 1. *The Servant's Part*

Everywhere the Scriptures recognize the right of man to use for his own benefit a portion of the things which God has placed about him and a portion of those things which he produces. "The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits" (2 Tim. 2: 6) is Paul's declaration of this fact. There is a basic economic law involved, for unless the laborer is well-fed and well-housed, he cannot render the most efficient service, cannot produce to the maximum of his capacity. God long ago revealed to man a principle which many industrial lords have refused to recognize, for had they done so there would not today be a sweatshop factory or any place where one finds undernourished, poorly-housed and ill-cared-for laborers, nor would legislation have been required to abolish them.

The servant of God, therefore, has the right to provide out of his earnings for the *necessities of life*. He should study to know what these are, and should seek the advice of men who are trained to give it. Fortunately our governments have at last realized their responsibility along this line, and nearly every community has its health workers who are able to advise all who wish to know about what to secure in order to make themselves healthy and strong and capable of the best service. And of course, along with himself, he must provide for *those dependent*

*upon him.* He who does not provide for those of his own household is said to be worse than the infidel (1 Tim. 5:8); hence no Christian can fail here. Furthermore, the good servant will also bear in mind that there will come days when he cannot labor, either because of old age or because of illness. He will therefore go to the ant and learn from it that he should *lay by in store* against the lean days. Finally, he will know that his best interests demand a certain amount of *relaxation, recreation, and study*, so he will provide out of his earnings some few things through which he may find rest from his regular duties and aid to his own culture.

## 2. *The Public's Portion*

Every disciple of Christ should know that he is under obligation to be a good citizen of his country, a productive part of society from which he draws his livelihood. "For none of us liveth to himself" (Rom. 14: 7) is the Word of God to everyone and should be considered. The welfare of society depends upon the form of government which it has, and any government is an expensive institution. Jesus himself recognized the right of governments to demand of their citizens tribute in the form of taxes, and one of his miracles was performed in order to meet this demand (Matt. 17: 24-27). Because governments are ministers of God for good to people (Rom. 13: 4), we are commanded to pay tribute (Rom. 13: 6). The true Christian will therefore recognize his obligations to all society and pay whatever taxes his position and possessions may require. Evasion of such a duty is sin.

The obligation of a man to society has not been met in full with the payment of taxes, and certainly the Christian has not thus done all his part. In every civilized land there are general agencies which work for the common welfare, yet which, by virtue of their origin and purpose, are not objects of tax support. Among these are our child welfare organizations, our temperance, and social service orders, the good will center, the Red

Cross, the antituberculosis movement, and such. One may feel that he does not need the aid of these agencies, but who can tell when he may become the victim of some calamity? Who knows when he may be infected by disease germs because of the presence about him of those who are carriers? As long as there are little children, there will be need of agencies which study and provide for their welfare. As long as there are slums in our cities, there will be a place for the good will center and its ministry. As long as there are tornados, earthquakes, famines, and pestilences, there will be need of some agency like the Red Cross. As long as the dread white plague and other diseases which may be communicated prevail, there will be need of agencies that give their time and utilize the best talent in warfare against them. Until the depraved money lovers of this world are converted and the traffic in alcohol, opiates, and other such concoctions ceases, there will be a vital need for the ministry of the organizations which labor to protect mankind from such wicked people. The labors of such agencies are larger than any one church can maintain, and most of them serve in a field wherein they may be joined by people of all religious faiths or of no religious faith. Working as they do for the welfare of society as a whole, they deserve the support of every one who loves society and wishes to make it more wholesome.

### *3. The Church and Its Part*

One's church has the rightful claim upon his tithe and may also expect him to make generous offerings in addition. This statement is made upon the assumption that the individual church is an honest administrator of the funds which are placed in its treasury. Since no good steward of Christ can conscientiously refrain from supporting the world program of the Lord, it follows that if a church refuses to give to missions, any member in it may, and should, designate a portion of his tithe directly to missionary, educational, and benevolent agencies. If

a church wastes its funds on useless things to the hurt of the general denominational causes, a member has a right to see that a portion of his gifts goes to the outside causes. But, whenever a church has planned its budget wisely, included in it only whatever is absolutely essential for its own welfare, and given every dollar possible to outside causes, it has a right to expect its members to pay into its treasury their tithes, and when it challenges them to make special offerings, they will gladly respond.

The budget of a church must provide an adequate support for its own work. It is the unit in our entire kingdom program. Whatever the denomination may hope to do in the way of general work is determined by the strength, virility, and spirituality of the churches which compose it. No church can grow and prosper without a pastor, and the most effective pastor is he who lives among his people and is supported by his church, or churches, so as to make it possible for him to give all his time to study of the Word, to visiting his people, building them up in the faith, comforting them in sorrow and distress, and otherwise serving as their shepherd. The church also needs an adequate house and equipment. Its budget, therefore, should include provision for all its essential local needs. All such items, including funds for the care of the local poor, constitute the current expense side of the church budget, and every member should gladly engage to pay his portion of it.

Since no church can be obedient to the Great Commission and not provide for work outside its own field, it follows that every true New Testament church will include in its budget a liberal sum which will be sent to the agencies which serve all the churches in their general program. Among most denominations there is one general board in each state which provides a treasury through which the funds of the churches may be transmitted to these agencies at the least possible cost and under the greatest safeguards. Churches cannot know just where it is best to undertake to do mission work, or where hospitals may best be established, or when and

where schools and orphanages should be established. They therefore send messengers to the general bodies and there help to reach sane decisions about such matters. When these decisions have been made and the agencies and institutions are established, it becomes the duty of all the churches to support them, and this they can do by including in their budgets funds to be sent through the established headquarters. Where a definite sum or percentage is included in the church budget, it is said to have a single budget. Wherever the members make a separate pledge to the outside causes, the church is said to have a double budget. But whether it has a single or a double budget, every good steward of Christ will have part in supporting both the local and the general causes of the denomination of which his church is a part.

#### IV. REALIZING OUR GOAL

It takes a long time of consecrated service for one to begin to realize that service is more than earning wealth, that life is more than money. Whenever stewardship is properly understood by the Christian, when he fully knows that he is not his own, he is bought with a price, then he is ready to "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3: 14). The effort which takes one all the way embraces four distinct stages.

##### 1. *The Surrender*

Every bond slave has first of all to be brought to where his will is subservient unto the master's will. The greatest battle the Christian has to fight is with self. And until he can fully, freely, and joyously declare "Not my will but thine be done," he cannot hope to have the fullest and most fruitful service under the direction of the Holy Spirit. The struggle against self is often terrific. Jesus understands it and sympathizes with every one of his disciples, for he was tested in all points like as we are (Heb. 4: 15). Out in the wilderness Satan besought

him to refuse complete obedience to God. In the garden of Gethsemane he besought the Lord to escape the cross. Success in Christian living is determined by one's self. How very careful and prayerful every young Christian should be, therefore, that he may make his decisions in conformity to the will of his Lord!

### *2. The Growth*

Once the will has been yielded to the Master, growth in the Christian graces begins. We grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord (2 Peter 3:18). Well may we work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2: 12), because there are so many chances of making mistakes, of doing the wrong thing. Yet we may do so with confidence because "it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do his good pleasure." Being assured that God is working in us, and being willing to be guided in our labors by the Holy Spirit, the Christian needs not worry about living a barren life, but can be inspired by the certainty that he is growing daily in knowledge and in ability, thus making sure his future rewards.

### *3. The Maturity*

Some years ago at a young people's meeting, a young man was called on to lead in prayer. It was his first effort. He could hardly make a beginning. After a few words he managed to say "Amen" and sat down, humiliated and disgusted with himself. At the close of the service a white-haired saint went to him and said, "You did well tonight, my son; you said four more words than I did when I prayed my first prayer in public." The gentle encouragement helped the lad, and he went on trying. Today he is a mature man; he has served his Lord for many years; he has grown in grace and knowledge; his prayer life is the subject of praise throughout his community; his labors have ripened and he is reaping his reward, while the cause of his Master is enriched daily by his service. All the Christian graces are matured through years of cultivation. The glory of Christian

living is found in the increasing strength of character and the ever-widening sphere of influence and usefulness which come to one who strives.

#### *4. The Culmination*

Were this temporal life all there is to be considered, one would yet be richly rewarded by beginning early in life to train for service in the Lord's kingdom. In every community of our land there are some gray-haired saints who are honored and esteemed above all others because of their holy lives and sanctified service. But their joy is not found in the praise of their fellows, however much they may appreciate it. It is found in anticipation of the day when they will "cross the bar," and when faith will have become sight. Jesus has given his servants a picture of that gladsome day when the faithful disciples will stand before him and receive their rewards, accompanied with his divine praise, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25: 21).

The mystery of heaven may not be comprehended by finite minds. We may faintly discern it through the types and shadows of the eternal Word, and we may catch gleams of it from those whose spirits are just ready to cross over. We must enter into its glories in order to know them. And when the shades of our temporal night begin to close about our physical eyes and our spirits struggle loose from their chambers in these tenements of clay, then it is that the full meaning of service for Christ will manifest itself. Then will the things of this world cease to call, because our carnal selves will have begun their return to the dust. All those things which lure us from our devotion to the Lord Jesus and which tend to rob him of the fullest use of our lives, our talents, our possessions, our all, will then pass behind, and we shall go out to where we can know that to be obedient unto the heavenly vision is more than any money the world may ever have piled into our hands.

When the bondslaves shall have become joint heirs with their Lord, then will they understand what a glori-



ous privilege was the stewardship committed to them on earth; then will they know, even as also they are known, and will rejoice with continuing delight in the eternal blessings which money could not buy but which become available to everyone who, having learned the meaning of stewardship of life, shall have yielded himself—influence, talents, possessions, money, all—to the will of him who is “able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Tim. 1: 12).

### SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Show from illustrations taken out of Old Testament history that the law failed to make men good.
2. Why is it that all people are prone to give undue honor to, and to have a feeling of awe in the presence of, a person who has great wealth?
3. Prepare what you deem a sane, businesslike budget for yourself if your income is, or should ever become, as much as \$3,000 per year. What portion of it would you place at the disposal of Christ?
4. Name the methods familiar to you whereby people seek to evade payment of their just taxes.
5. Study carefully Chapter VII in *\*Stewardship Vitalized*, by Walt N. Johnson.
6. Can you think of a more inspiring picture of the end of life than that presented in our Bible, in which the glorious reception of the faithful stewards of Christ is presented?
7. In the light of these studies, what is your opinion about the place of money in human affairs? Can you conscientiously claim that what God offers his faithful bondslaves is not worth more than any money which they may amass in sinful ways?

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\*Out of print. Perhaps your pastor or your library has a copy.



## QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW AND EXAMINATION

See Directions for the Teaching and the Study of This Book for Credit, page 9.

### CHAPTER I

1. How may we know what value God has placed upon the human soul?
2. Give three reasons for knowing that the price of redemption was prepared in glory.
3. Describe the crucifixion and tell why it was necessary for Jesus so to die.
4. Discuss the means whereby the lost soul is redeemed from bondage to Satan.
5. What compelling motive does Jesus furnish his followers?
6. What three phases of safe fellowship are assured by Christ?

### CHAPTER II

7. What threefold capacity has the human body? Describe this complicated "temple of the spirit."
8. Name ways by which a young person may permanently injure his body and tell how he may conserve and strengthen it.
9. What two words involve all the commands of Jesus? Show why this is true.
10. What is the great goal of all Christian service?
11. Show why a definite plan for one's life is essential to success.
12. How may the various members of one's body, together with his mental and spiritual talents, be brought into an invincible host?

### CHAPTER III

13. Describe the "people's Bible" and tell why it is such a powerful agency for good or evil.

14. Discuss the basic reason for the curse which money brings to human society.
15. How may the Christian mar the reproduction of the character of Christ which he presents to the world, and what three-fold tragedy results from such?
16. What three questions should guide us in our plans for building a reputation?
17. Describe our regal partnership and show how the Christian may prove worthy of it.

#### CHAPTER IV

18. Tell what you can about the brain and give reasons for knowing that it does not function of its own self.
19. In what sense may each normal human being become a "master organist"?
20. Describe the four things upon which the servant's capacity depends.
21. Name four dangers to youth and tell how each may be avoided.
22. What must one do in order to be sure of the guidance of the Holy Spirit?
23. What requirements are made of him who would become a master workman?

#### CHAPTER V

24. How can one know that God is the creator of all temporal possessions? Give man's part in the creation program.
25. Name the three primary divisions of man's temporal estate and show why man does not actually own temporal things.
26. Describe the fourfold nature of the Christian trusteeship.
27. What four things govern the trustee in meeting his obligations to God?
28. Give some Scripture passages which show how rigid are the requirements made upon the steward in his accounting.
29. What evidences may be produced from nature to show that God can and does keep accurate records of all man's affairs?

## QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW, EXAMINATION 153

### CHAPTER VI

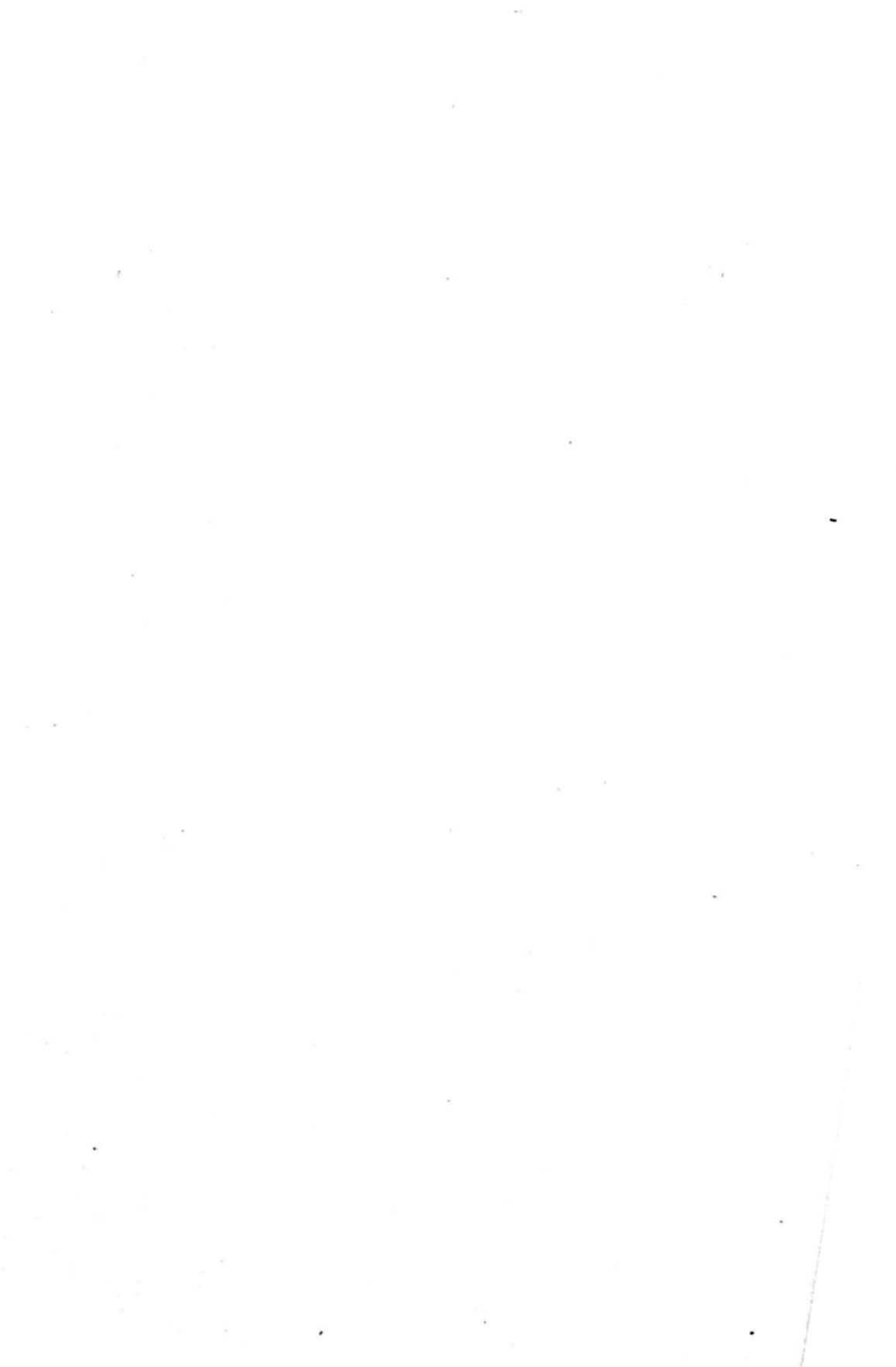
30. Tell of the origin of money and show how its value is determined today.
31. Why is money the acid test of character?
32. Name four ways by which we may make sacred use of money.
33. How should one dispose of that portion of his money which he dedicates directly to God's work?
34. Tell how the refusal of so many to give to our Christian work brings hurt to the cause of Christ.

### CHAPTER VII

35. Give a brief account of the origin of the tithe and tell why Abram gave tithes to Melchizedek.
36. Tell something of the hypocrisy of tithers as shown in the Bible.
37. What is real giving and what is the standard by which everyone should measure his gifts?
38. Give some fallacies about tithing and tell how you would answer them.
39. Does the Christian have a right to say how he shall spend his money? What three obligations placed by God upon mankind govern your answer?

### CHAPTER VIII

40. What three forces determine most human actions? Upon which did Jesus make his appeal to man for obedience?
41. Why does God want proof of the love of his children and how does giving prove one's loyalty to Christ?
42. In what way may giving be made a means of self-discipline?
43. What responsibility does the Christian owe to his church in regard to his gifts and their uses?
44. What four stages mark the effort to realize the goal of Christian living?
45. In the light of your study of this book, tell what you think of the wisdom or folly of trading the promised reward of faithful service to Christ for any sum of money the world may provide the Christian who betrays his Lord.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

To those who may be interested in pursuing the study of life and its meaning, who may wish to know more about the relative values of temporal things and spiritual realities, the author would suggest the following books as worth while.

- \**Divine Reason of the Cross*, Henry C. Mabie
- \**Trusteeship of Life*, W. G. Jordan
- \**Christianity at Work*, John M. Versteeg
- \**Christ's Ecclesia*, H. E. Dana
- \**Vitalizing the Church Program*, G. S. Dobbins and John L. Riffey
- \**First Christian Impulses*, H. L. Winburn
- \**I Follow the Road*, Anne Byrd Payson
- \**Christianity and Social Problems*, J. M. Price
- \**Religious Faith of Great Men*, Archer Wallace
- \**Stewardship Vitalized*, W. N. Johnson
- \**The Pathfinder in Church Work with Young People*, Edwin Phelps
- \**This Is My Church*, F. F. Brown
- Some Learning Processes*, L. P. Leavell and John L. Hill
- Into All the World*, A. J. Brown and John D. Freeman
- \**Men of the Great Redemption*, W. L. Stidger
- \**Talks to Young People*, George A. Crapullo
- Passing On the Torch*, A. T. Robertson
- \**The Problem of Origins*, L. S. Keyser
- The Courage That Propels*, G. Ray Jordan

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\*Out of print. Perhaps your pastor or your library has a copy.

